



Lifestyle / E1

10 wardrobe musts for long hot summer

Opinion / A15

Doronila says Lopez family to emerge winner

Business / B1

Gov't debt balloons to P3.41T



Entertainment / C1

MTRCB declares 'Kinse' ads obscene

Tanong Bayan / A18

Maynilad Water: Tayo ba ang nadale? NGAYONG ALAS-10 NG GABI

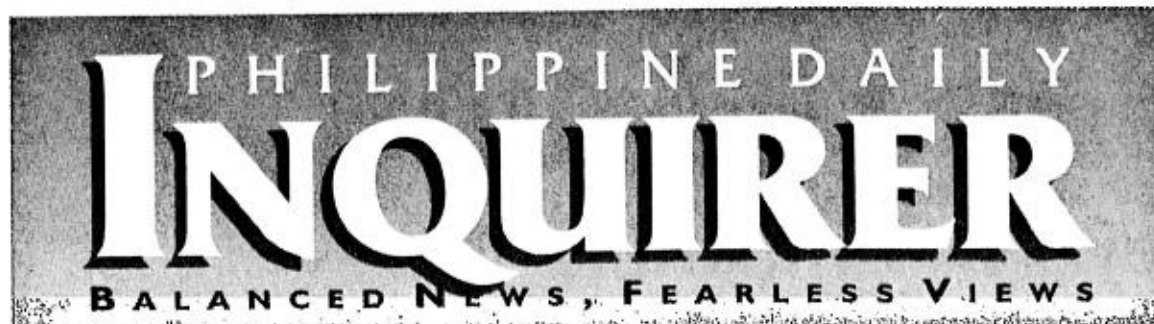


Case of missing waterfall puzzles environmentalists

By Delfin T. Mallari Jr.
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

LUCENA CITY—A group of foreign environmental lawyers are alarmed that a once-vibrant waterfall on Mount Banahaw, a famous pilgrimage and mountaineering site in Quezon province, has disappeared.

CASE / A22



email: feedback@inquirer.com.ph

Friday, March 26, 2004 ★★ 88 pages / 11 sections / vol. 19 / no. 109

P18

website: www.inq7.net

Traders see Bro. Eddie in different, better light

By Blanche S. Rivera

EVANGELIST Eddie Villanueva is not projecting "winnability" in the latest surveys, but "a very different picture" may emerge in the next two months as the election campaign goes full blast.

Makati Business Club (MBC) chair Ricardo TRADERS / A21

Deal saves Lopezzes P2B

Maynilad document obtained by PDI reveals 'sweetheart deal'

By Philip C. Tubeza, Michael Lim Ubac and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

WHILE MALACANANG rejected insinuations it was a sweetheart deal, the agreement between Maynilad and the state-run Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System shows the Lopezzes are expected to "save" P2.4 billion, aside from not having to pay P8 billion in concession fees, with the government takeover of the debt-saddled Maynilad Water Services.

A copy of the agreement obtained by the INQUIRER also showed that customers in Metro Manila may not recover the P6.4 billion that Maynilad had illegally collected from them over the past three years.

Under the agreement, the Lopez family through Benpres Holdings Corp., is expected to save roughly P2.4 billion because the government would collect only \$50 million of the \$120-million performance bond that was supposed to cover Maynilad's unpaid concession fees since 2001.

The P2.4 billion represents 60 percent of the \$70-million balance of the performance bond with the remaining 40 percent, or P1.4 billion, going to Benpres' partner, Ondeo Services (formerly Suez Water).

But unlike the Lopezzes, who have totally abandoned Maynilad, Ondeo agreed to convert its debt to equity to retain at least a 20-percent share in the water utility.

The government agreed to collect only \$50 million of the performance bond in exchange for the Lopezzes' and Ondeo's withdrawal of

their legal objections to the bond's disbursement as ordered by an international arbitration panel, which had ruled in favor of the government.

Amendment No. 2 to the contract agreement says that not only does the MWSS free Maynilad from paying P8 billion in concession fees, the MWSS is also paying for the bridge loans acquired to finance Maynilad's capital expenditures back in 1999.

The banks that extended the bridge loans included BNP Paribas, Barclays Capital, Citibank N.A., Tokai Bank of Japan and Co-finance of France.

Benpres originally guaranteed to pay all these loans, but the banks would now go after the MWSS because of the compromise deal.

Under the proposed term sheet for the bridge banks, the new company to be named New Maynilad would pay \$39 million in seven years at concessional rates between one percent and 3 percent over prevailing interest rates. The \$8 million will be paid within a

DEAL SAVES / A21



FROM ONE SUPERSTAR TO ANOTHER: Not all stars are for FPJ. The original superstar, Nora Aunor, makes the scene on the side of President Macapagal at the launch of "Biyaheng Gloria" caravan. (Story on Page A9.)

7th DQ case vs GMA: Use of road tax for campaign

By Martin P. Marfil

THE SEVENTH disqualification case was filed yesterday against President Macapagal-Arroyo.

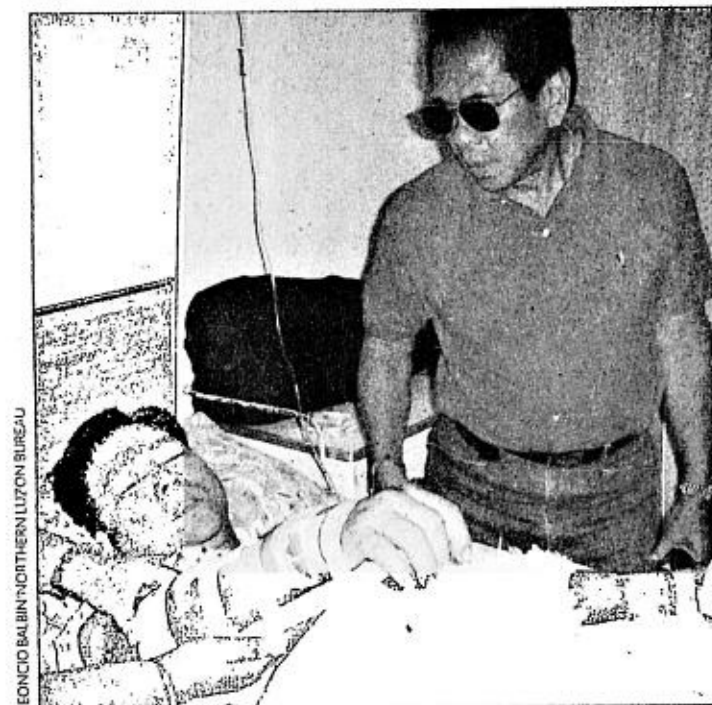
This time Ms Macapagal is accused of using some P1.4 billion in road users' tax for her electoral campaign in a case filed at the Comelec by Mariano Santiago, former head of the Bureau of Land Transportation.

The President said the cases filed against her were meant to prevent her from serving the people. "Every case filed against me is an opportunity for my detractors and the opposition to grandstand in the media," she said in a statement.

Santiago said he also filed a case with the Office of the Ombudsman against Public Works Secretary Florante Soriquez and several others in connection with the road users' tax.

In his complaint, Santiago said the President and other officials violated the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act, the Anti-Plunder Law and the Revised Penal Code for gross malversation and misappropriation and plunder of public funds.

7TH DQ / A8



VIOLENCE at the start of the 45-day campaign period for local officials sends Chavit Singson, Lakas-CMD candidate, and Vice Mayor Romeo Tan to the Holy Family Hospital in Candon, Ilocos Sur.

Violence ushers in local polls campaign

By Frank Cimatu and Leoncio Balbin Jr.
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

CANDON, Ilocos Sur—As though on cue, election-related violence marked the start yesterday of the official campaign period for municipal and regional posts.

Vice Mayor Romeo Tan of Sta. Maria town was shot and wound-

ed by two armed men at about 5:30 a.m., hours before he was to sign an election peace covenant with other candidates.

Tan, who was taken to the Holy Family Hospital for treatment of arm and leg wounds, told reporters that the shooting was politically motivated.

On the eve of the local campaign, six people including a

barangay captain and her husband, were killed and seven others were seriously wounded in an attack by 10 gunmen in Isabela province. The group was on its way to a wake in Cabagan town.

Chief Supt. Jefferson Soriano told The Associated Press that the Wednesday-night attack was likely linked to politics or to a land dispute.

Vice Mayor Tan, 44, was among the earliest to arrive for the Mass scheduled before the signing of the peace covenant in the compound of the historic Sta. Maria Church.

The church, perched on a hill overlooking the highway, was used as a fortress during the Philippine Revolution of 1896.

Tan said he had just come from

VIOLENCE / A22

AYOKO SA KING AT SA KANYANG REYNA? DITO ANG BEAUTY KO SA QUEEN!



Manoling at it again

By Jerry Esplanada

MANOLING Morato is at it again, spewing venom.

Much of it is still aimed at his old foe, Armida Siguion-Reyna, but now includes other show biz folk who, like her, are backing Fernando Poe Jr., Philippine movies' "Action King" and standard-bearer of the opposition Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino.

MANOLING / A21

THE CHARM OFFENSIVE

FPJ generates hysteria, a kind of electricity

Editor's Note: The INQUIRER continues a series of essays on the campaign style and impact of the five presidential candidates, a two-parter for each in alphabetical order.

By Emmie G. Velarde
Desk Editor

(Last of two parts)

ONE WORD to describe an FPJ motorcade: hysterical.

It usually kicks off with Holy Mass, wherever Fernando Poe Jr.'s Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino may be; otherwise it could be something worse, like anarchy.

"Sometimes there would be so many people, the vehicles can't move," says Lourdes "Bing" Pimentel, wife of senatorial candidate Aquilino "Nene" Pimentel.

"Kahit andyan kami, nagkakasugat-sugat si FPJ; ang braso niya, puro kalniot

FPJ / A22



FERNANDO POE JR., here shown at a campaign rally in Tacloban City three weeks ago, now looks and sounds even more determined to be president of the Philippines.

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Extreme Northern Luzon will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will have partly cloudy to at times cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers or thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LUYSA, FOR RESEARCH/NEWS/STAFF

E-mail: pr_news@inquirer.com.ph

Second FRONT PAGE

Metro Manila Partly Cloudy
Baguio Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao Partly Cloudy
Laoag Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone Partly Cloudy
Tagaytay Partly Cloudy
Legazpi Partly Cloudy
Cebu Partly Cloudy

Iloilo/Bacolod Partly Cloudy
Roxas Partly Cloudy
Cebu Partly Cloudy
Tacloban Partly Cloudy
Gen. Santos Partly Cloudy
Zamboanga Partly Cloudy
Cagayan de Oro Partly Cloudy
Davao Partly Cloudy

Raps filed vs Angie

Widow says Reyes behind kidnappings

By Armand N. Nocum

THE WIFE of a slain top aide of anti-kidnapping czar Angelo "Angie" Reyes has accused Reyes, national police chief Gen. Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. and eight other police and military officials of killing her husband and of staging "make-believe" successes in the fight against kidnapping syndicates.

Lorna Justina Ramoso, widow of Rogelio Ramoso, said to be a "civilian agent and close-in bodyguard" of Reyes, also accused Sen. Noli de Castro and GMA 7 television reporter Jiggy Manicad of covering up the "staged" killing of her husband and others.

"My husband was a professional hit-man. He was tasked by Reyes to kidnap people who were later rescued by the National Anti-Kidnapping Task Force led by Reyes," Ramoso told a media briefing at the Ombudsman's office.

In a case of kidnapping and multiple murder which she filed before the Ombudsman's office, Ramoso denied that her husband, his brother Ronald Ramoso, Edwin Pastrana and Ricky Original had kidnapped Jethro Chua.

The Ramoso brothers, Pastrana and Original were killed in a shoot-out with police and Naktf agents in Mabitac, Laguna on Dec. 31, 2003, nearly 24 hours after one of their alleged accomplices was arrested and the two-year-old Chua was rescued from a nearby safehouse.

Col. Danilo Servando,

spokesperson of the National Anti-Kidnapping Task Force, had said at the time that the Chua kidnapping was considered solved with the killing of the four suspects.

Sought for comment, Servando yesterday said Reyes refused to make a statement since he had not read Ramoso's complaint.

Chua, son of a Chinese-Filipino businessman, was abducted by armed men on Dec. 2, 2003 in Muntinlupa.

Atmosphere

Ramoso said the killing of the four and other people who had been implicated in smuggling was intended to "artificially create an atmosphere of violence ... to scare the Chinese-Filipino community."

This was reportedly intended to "later secure their support after a series of cosmetically staged accomplishments where make-believe shoot-outs and rescues are the main ingredients."

Also charged were Servando, Maj. Gen. Pedro Cabuay, Francisco Lanuza, Police Director Ricardo de Leon, Police Supt. Reynaldo Varilla, Police Supt.

Restituto Mosqueda, Supt. Allan Purisima, Supt. Edgar Danao, PSI Erwin Fernandez and several others.

Ramoso said her husband was a "victim of deception because he was a good servant to his master."

"Let it be known that the top brass of the police and the military are in fact the masterminds of these heinous crimes," she said.

The widow of Original, who accompanied Ramoso to the Ombudsman's office, confirmed Ramoso's allegations. She said her husband was the driver of Rogelio Ramoso who, she said, was carrying out clandestine operations on orders of Reyes.

Ramoso claimed to have obtained her husband's SIM card from a phone reportedly given by Reyes. It allegedly contained a text message from Reyes ordering the slain Ramoso to pick up P1 million in ransom from Chua's family last Dec. 29. She said the whole thing turned out to have been a setup.

Knew too much

She surmised her husband was killed because he wanted to get out of Naktf and he knew too much.

He was allegedly recruited into the group of Reyes in April 2001 after police operatives under Danao raided his home and planted a firearm there. Danao reportedly asked him to join

them and do "special projects for Reyes" in exchange for being charged with a lesser offense.

He reportedly received P26,000 a month from Reyes, who also issued to him an M-16 rifle and a .45 caliber pistol. In December 2003, Reyes also reportedly gave the slain Ramoso a '94 Mitsubishi Lancer for use in their operations.

Noli, too

Ramoso included De Castro in the charges for allegedly using his "Magandang Gabi Bayan" program to pin down her husband. Although an MGB staff interviewed her in January 2, she said the show did not project her defense of her husband.

As for Manicad, she said her husband mentioned him as being in "Naktf's payroll" who often "[legitimized] the fake raids and murder scenarios for a fee."

In a statement faxed to the INQUIRER yesterday, Manicad said his only involvement in the Chua case was that he was assigned by GMA News to do a follow-up story the day after the kidnapping in Muntinlupa.

"I totally deny the accusation that I am in the payroll of Naktf. I have never covered any raid or murder case by the Naktf. I have come out with a series of kidnapping stories but not one of them was coordinated with Naktf," he said.



MANDELA'S GRANDDAUGHTER

Nandi Mandela, granddaughter of former South African president Nelson Mandela, is in the country to receive the Congressional Medal of Achievement in his behalf. In a ceremony Thursday at the residence of Speaker Jose de Venecia, the Philippine official said the 85-year-old Mandela was honored as "one of the greatest political and moral leaders ... for creating a nation founded on reconciliation and fraternity of white and black people, and for his heroic role in leading the African National Congress that fought apartheid." South Africa marks on April 27 the 10th anniversary of the formal end of apartheid. The same award was also given to Malaysian Prime Minister Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, UN Food and Agriculture Organization head Jacques Diouf, and Libyan leader Moammar Gadhafi. ROGER MARGALLO

Truflat

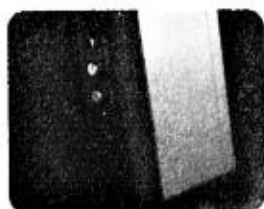
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Stanley Ho? Ask Pagcor, says Palace

MALACANANG yesterday declined to confirm the reported reentry of Macau gambling lord Stanley Ho into the country, passing the buck to the Philippine Amusements and Gaming Corp.

"We'd like to refer that to Pagcor, they're the ones on top of the situation," said presidential spokesperson Ignacio Bunye.

Bunye said that while Pagcor was under the Office of the President, the matter of the contro-

versial Macau casino involved "operational details that they (Pagcor) would have at their fingertips but we don't have information on other that what was reported in the papers."

Bunye also denied that Ho, whose entry into the country via a floating casino-restaurant was rebuffed during the term of ousted President Joseph Estrada, had contributed to the campaign of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Juliet Labog-Javellana



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Local campaigns boost nat'l bets

CANDIDATES made door-to-door calls and noisy motorcades rumbled through villages and towns across the country yesterday as campaigning began for more than 17,000 local posts in the May 10 elections. They were joined by supporters of presidential, vice presidential and senatorial bets, whose campaigns started six weeks ago.

President Macapagal-Arroyo and film idol Fernando Poe Jr. are neck-and-neck in polls for the top job and both sides said the local campaigns would give them a boost.

"The final road to victory starts today as the local campaign cuts in," Ms Macapagal said. Poe's handlers said it expected a 10 percent rise in support from local campaigning.

With political parties weak, presidential candidates must rely on local allies to rally support for them.

"What you are talking about is the kind of machinery the presidential candidates will be largely relying on," said Felipe Miranda, head of Pulse Asia, a polling firm.

Local candidates lost no time yesterday in joining the national bets on the campaign trail.

K4 senatorial would jump ship.

Senate President Franklin Drilon, chair of the Liberal Party which is under the K4 coalition, dismissed the report, saying the slate was "solid and intact."

Two Liberal Party supporters of Alyansa ng Pag-asa presidential bet Raul Roco, on the other hand, are now backing the President, he said. They are Calocan Rep. Egay Erico, a mayoral bet in Calocan, and former Mindoro Gov. Rodolfo Valencia, who is running for Congressman.

Fiesta mood

A festive atmosphere marked the start of the local campaign in Naga, Zamboanga Sibugay, with presidential candidate Raul Roco and running mate, Herminio Aquino, joining Muslims who performed tribal dances in front of the town hall.

Roco also endorsed the candidacies of the local bets of the Alyansa ng Pag-asa, including Naga Vice Mayor Rafael Jambaro, who is running for mayor, and Francis Noceti, candidate in the province's first congressional district.

Senatorial candidates Edno Josen, Jay Sonza, Perfecto Yasay, Frank Chavez and Melanio Mauricio also campaigned in Dipolog City and other towns of Zamboanga del Norte before moving to Pagadian City and Naga.

Waiting for right time

In Imus, Cavite, Sen. Panfilo Lacson, said yesterday he was optimistic the campaign period for local candidates would bring out more of his supporters from among grassroots officials.

"Many local officials support me but are not yet vocal about it. They are just waiting for the right time," Lacson said at the birthday celebration of Cavite Gov. Irineo Maliks.

Apart from the Tagalog provinces of Bulacan, Batangas, Cavite, Laguna, Rizal and Quezon, Lacson said he was confident he would make a strong showing in at least two regions in Mindanao where he claimed his campaign has "gained ground." *Christine Avendaño, Michael Lim Ubac, Norman Bordadora, Mei Magsino, Ferdinand O. Zuasola, Reuters*

Two foes on same stage

In Batangas City, former Justice Secretary Hernando "Nani" Perez and Sto. Tomas town Mayor Arman Sanchez, gubernatorial rivals, met on stage at a proclamation rally yesterday.

The meeting broke a two-week-old gentleman's agreement that both candidates endorsed by Ms Macapagal were not supposed to go on stage with the President.

Perez denied knowing about the agreement, saying he was invited to the affair by Ms Macapagal and Gov. Hermilando Mandanas. Perez also insisted he did not walk out, as claimed by the Sanchez camp.

"He (Perez) knew he wasn't supposed to be there, but he came and even went up the stage with the President. So Sanchez went up too, together with the mayors. That's when Nani walked out," said Ronnie Geron, Sanchez's and Koalisyon ng Lakas ng Batangas' spokesperson.

The President's campaign yesterday was also marred by talk that some members of the

Me a newsreader? Pub-leeze, says Loren

By Carlito Pablo

LOREN a mere newsreader? *Pub-leeze!*

Sen. Loren Legarda is not happy about being referred to in that manner in newspaper reports, as she apparently considers the job of newsreader as too "low-status."

Legarda would rather be described as a broadcast journalist, and a "multi-awarded" one at that, she reminded reporters in Meycauayan, Bulacan on Wednesday where she and opposition standard-bearer Fernando Poe Jr. were on a campaign sortie.

Legarda is running for vice president in the opposition Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino, her closest rival being Sen. Noli de Castro, her broadcast colleague at the ABS-CBN television network.

"I was a producer," she said, referring to her long stint at the ABS-CBN media empire



LEGARDA

of the Lopez family.

She said she was born into a family of journalists, her maternal grandfather Jose "Joe" Bautista having been editor-in-chief of the pre-martial law "The Manila Times" newspaper.

Legarda's official biodata being circulated by her campaign staff noted that Bautista was "the leading figure of Philippine journalism in the years of both the Philippine Commonwealth and the early Philippine Republic."

The biodata noted that Legarda started as a "television newscaster," initially with Radio Philippines Network's "Newswatch" and later at ABS-CBN's "The World Tonight."

"Natural talent, hard work and dedication to duty also led her to the more challenging world of investigative reporting and political commentary in PEP Talk and The Inside Story, top-rating television programs which she anchored," the biodata said.

It also said that she was a recipient of the Catholic Mass Media award given by the Archdiocese of Manila and a special citation from the Kapisanan ng mga Brodkaster sa Pilipinas.

Probe John O son on drugs, urges NBI

By Jhunnex Napallacan and Connie E. Fernandez
PDI Visayas Bureau

CEBU CITY—The National Bureau of Investigation has recommended to the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency the inclusion of Cebu Vice Gov. John Gregory Osmeña in the investigation into the controversial shipment of 60 drums of pseudo-ephedrine, a chemical used in the manufacture of shabu.

Lawyer Reynaldo Esmeralda, NBI director for Central Visayas, recommended the PDEA summon Osmeña after three of his staff were linked to the shipment, considered the biggest haul of regulated drugs in the area. The finished shabus could generate P3.6 billion in sales.

PDEA chief Anselmo Avenido said the agency did not have evidence that tied directly the vice governor, son of Sen. John Osmeña, to the contraband, but he assured the public there would be no whitewash of the investigation.

Edgar Gica, lawyer and spokesperson of Osmeña, said they would participate in any investigation if they were summoned and provided with all official documents the NBI has.

The shipment from China was declared illegal by PDEA because the consignee, Coast-

side Ventures Inc. (CVI), failed to secure a special import permit.

The name of Joebert Cuesta, Osmeña's executive assistant, appeared in the certification issued by PDEA which allowed the importation and distribution of controlled precursors and essential elements that include pseudo-ephedrine hydrochloride.

In an affidavit submitted to the NBI, Cuesta denied that he was the Cuesta identified as the CVI president in the PDEA certification.

Rorela Villegas, legislative staff III at the Office of the Vice Governor, was allegedly the one who signed the lease agreement with the owner of the warehouse in Mandaue City, which was listed as the business address of CVI based on the shipment manifest.

Villegas allegedly represented CVI in the contract of lease with Susan Bernardo, administrator of J. King Warehouse Complex on Hernan Complex Road, Mandaue City.

Esmeralda also cited newspaper reports that one Maria Rowena Tura Roldan, a confidential assistant of Osmeña, was named president of the CVI based on the record of the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC).

Gica denied the allegations, saying none of Osmeña's staff were in the CVI's certificate of incorporators as well as the article of incorporators they acquired from the SEC.

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RELATIVES of still missing passengers and SuperFerry staff held a wreath-laying and ecumenical rites at the site of their sorrow yesterday off Mariveles, Bataan, after the Coast Guard ceased retrieval operations.

Keep up hunt for remains, ferry victims' kin plead

By Tarra Quismundo

HOPING to still find the remains of their loved ones, relatives of the missing passengers of the SuperFerry 14 yesterday appealed to the Coast Guard not to give up the search for bodies in the ship.

"We are pretty sure there are still areas that they [the search and retrieval teams] have not checked," said Edward Leyco, who spoke on behalf of other relatives of the missing.

Leyco has been waiting for news of his 60-year-old mother, Leonor, who was returning to Iligan City from a journalism workshop in Sta. Cruz, Laguna, on board the Bacolod and Cagayan de Oro-bound passenger ship which caught fire in Manila Bay on Feb. 27.

Leyco said the PCG should speed up the re-floating of the ship, which is lying on its starboard side in Sisiman Bay off Mariveles, Bataan.

The PCG and other volunteer search and retrieval teams have completed three days of mopping-up operations in the ship, following more than three weeks of searching through the vessel for passengers' remains.

Some 899 passengers and crew were on board the 10,000-ton ship when it caught fire past midnight on Feb. 27.

Leyco said the PCG, which gives the relatives daily updates about the recovery operations in Bataan, had assured them that the team would stay on in Mariveles even after the operations are called off.

But Leyco said the PCG should "not declare the total closure of the operations" until the ship is re-floated and a sweep through the vessel is once again conducted.

He said the SuperFerry management "should tell us in black and white when and what they plan to do once they (re-float) the ship, so that we could have something clear to tell our other relatives waiting in the provinces."

Coast Guard officials the other day recommended a halt to the retrieval operations after no remains were recovered from the ship in three days of mopping-up operations.

Some 50 relatives of the missing attended a Mass yesterday at the plaza in front of the Bayview Hotel, where the families of the SuperFerry 14 passengers have been billeted since search and rescue operations began.

Cimatu to Israel to check on Pinoys

By Jerome Aning

THE DEPARTMENT of Foreign Affairs yesterday said it has activated the Middle East Preparedness Team to monitor developments in Israel amid fears of renewed violence following the assassination of Hamas spiritual leader Sheikh Ahmed Yassin.

Ambassador Franklin Cimatu will be sent to Israel by next week to make an assessment of the Philippines' contingency plans in case violence there worsened, DFA Undersecretary Rafael Seguis said at a press briefing yesterday.

"They will concern themselves with the safety of our Filipino community in Israel, monitor the situation on the ground and make appropriate recommendations," Seguis said.

But he ruled out issuing alert warnings on Israel or a temporary suspension of the deployment of workers to the country.

There are some 75,000 Filipinos in Israel, including undocumented ones. The Philippine Embassy there has advised Filipinos to take precautions when moving around the country amid fears of Palestinian retaliation over Yassin's killing.

The activation of the MEPT is a preventive measure in case the cycle of violence escalates in Israel, Seguis said.

The MEPT's last mission was to prepare contingency plans for Filipinos in the Middle East as the United States-led coalition prepared to invade Iraq a year ago.

The 67-year-old Hamas leader was killed in an Israeli helicopter strike in the Gaza Strip on Monday.

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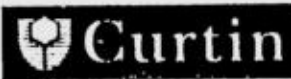
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Moros welcome truce observers

By TJ Burgonlo

A MUSLIM group advocating peace hailed yesterday the arrival of a Malaysian-led international monitoring team in Mindanao, saying this would check violations of the peace accord between the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).

The 12-man advance party arrived Wednesday to look into the implementation of the truce entered into by the Philippine

government and the MILF ahead of the resumption of formal peace talks in Kuala Lumpur next month.

"We welcome the sending of the monitoring team... in the past, there had been flagrant violations of the truce by both parties," Maradeka secretary general Nash Pangadapun said in a statement.

Maradeka is an alliance of Bangsamoro organizations that advocate peace and Islamic democracy.

Pangadapun voiced hopes the peace talks would go on as scheduled despite the distracting national and local election campaigns.

"Going back to the negotiating table is still the right thing to do as an alternative to armed confrontation," he said.

He expressed concern over reports certain government officials in North Cotabato were preventing the pullout of government troops from the Bulik complex, an MILF stronghold the military overran in 2000.

"Peace-loving people are urging these local leaders not to put a stumbling block to the resumption of the peace process," he said.

Peace talks between the government and the MILF were suspended in 2000 after then President Joseph Estrada declared an "all-out war" against the secessionist group in Mindanao.

Since then both sides had engaged in skirmishes that broke the truce they signed ahead of the resumption of the peace talks.

Pangadapun said Maradeka was hopeful it or another NGO would be admitted as an observer in the peace talks in Kuala Lumpur.

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Twice denied visa, ailing Fil-Am's sis finally gets to US

NEW ORLEANS, Louisiana—Under a humanitarian parole granted by United States authorities, Carmelita Fuchigami was able to travel to the US from the Philippines to save her older brother who is suffering from leukemia.

"I'm very, very happy to be here," Fuchigami told Agence France Presse.

"I feel great because the government gave me the visa. I'm grateful," she said.

Fuchigami, who lives in Baguio City, arrived here Tuesday to give a stem-cell transplant to her brother Philip Bongawil, a 57-year-old retired US Navy veteran dying of leukemia.

Fuchigami, 46, is the only member of Bongawil's family whose blood and tissue type provided a good match.

Bongawil's doctors had said he could die in weeks without a

transplant.

Fuchigami was twice denied a visa before finally receiving a humanitarian parole, a visa often used in medical emergencies, from the US Department of Homeland Security.

Consular officials in Seoul and Manila initially rejected her application for a non-immigrant visa, saying she had not provided sufficient proof of her intention to return to the Philippines.

The Bongawils attributed the initial refusal by US consular officials to jitters after the Sept. 11 attacks in New York and Washington DC in 2001.

Early next month, Bongawil and Fuchigami will travel to Houston, Texas, to begin a series of medical procedures expected to last four months.

Fuchigami said she was not nervous. "I'm willing to help my brother—to do whatever it

takes," she said.

Bongawil's doctors at MD Ander-

son Cancer Center put his chances of recovery at 50 percent. **AFP**

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DepEd loses Negros property to CARP

BAGUIO CITY—More than 189 hectares of sugarcane land owned by the Department of Education (DepEd) in Negros Occidental are up for distribution after the Supreme Court upheld Tuesday a decision by the Department of Agrarian Reform (DAR) to farm out the properties to qualified tenants.

The DAR had said in a decision on Aug. 30, 2000 that it would facilitate the acquisition of the landholdings and place them under the government's comprehensive agrarian reform program (CARP).

The DepEd, however, fought DAR's move to acquire the land, saying the income from its lease to Anglo Agricultural Corp. was "actually and directly being used for educational purposes." The properties of the department are located in Hacienda Fe in Escalante and Barangay Gen. Luna Sagay, both in Negros Occidental.

Esteban Jalandoni donated the land to the DepEd, formerly the Bureau of Education, on Oct. 21, 1921. The land is registered in DepEd's name under Transfer Certificate of Title No. T-167175.

Then Agrarian Reform Secretary Roberto Pagdanganan, now tourism secretary, approved a recommendation by the DAR regional office to place the land under CARP. But at the time DepEd had an existing 20-year lease agreement with Anglo, which expires in 2005.

In its petition with the SC, DepEd said the income from Anglo was used to repair its schools and experimental farm stations. **Delmar Cariño, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau**

THE DAILY GOSPEL



Friday, March 26, 2004
4th Week of Lent

1st Reading: Wis 2:1, 12-22
Gospel: Jn 7:1-2, 10, 25-30

Jesus went around Galilee; he would not go about in Judea because the Jews wanted to kill him. Now the Jewish feast of the Tents was at hand.

But after his brothers had gone to the festival, he also went up, not publicly but in secret.

Some of the people of Jerusalem said, "Is this not the man they want to kill? And here he is speaking freely, and they don't say a word to him? Can it be that the rulers know that this is really the Christ? Yet we know where this man comes from; but when the Christ appears, no one will know where he comes from."

So Jesus announced in a loud voice in the Temple court where he was teaching, "You say that you know me and know where I come from! I have not come of myself; I was sent by the One who is true, and you don't know him. I know him for I come from him and he sent me."

They would have arrested him, but no one laid hands on him because his time had not yet come.

Commentary

The Feast of Tabernacles or Tents is believed (by some scholars at least) to have been a commemoration of the forty years when the Jews wandered homeless through the desert. During the seven days of the feast they lived in tents.

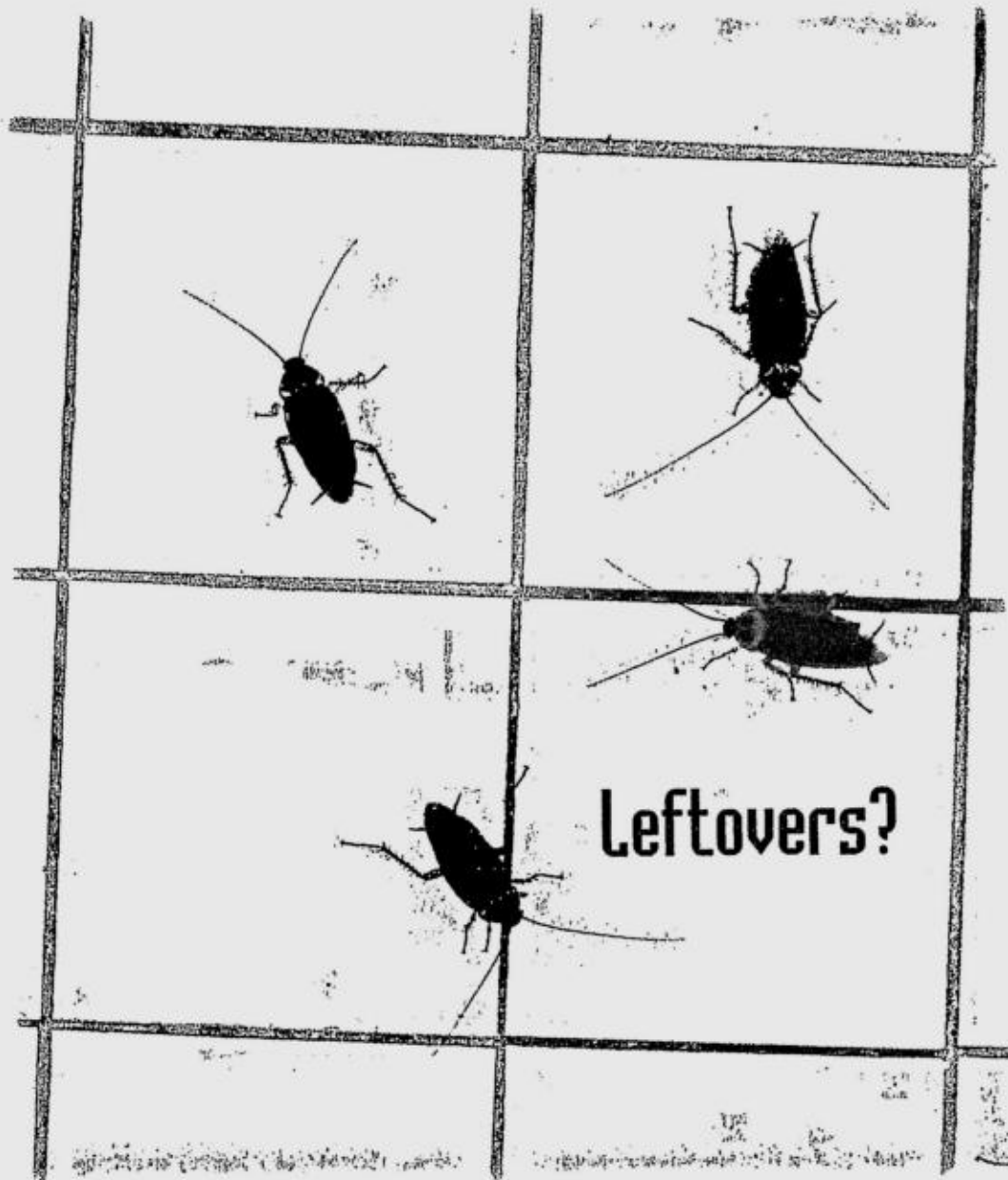
It may have been an annual reminder that they came from nowhere. Where is a tent? Nowhere.

But when they settled they settled in earnest. The place where a person lived became, in a way, his or her name: Jesus of Nazareth, Mary of Magdala, Joseph of Arimathea.

"We know where this man comes from," the people said. His identity was well pinned down. But, he said, "You say that you know me and know where I come from!" In fact, he told them, they didn't know. Nazareth was not his identity. They seemed to be equally sure of their own identity. But they came from nowhere, as the feast should have served to remind them. Certainty often conceals a vast amount of truth from us.

"I was sent by the One who is true, and you don't know him. I know him for I come from him and he sent me." This was his real identity. In our way, we too have to drop superficial identities and come to this realization.

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7th DQ case vs GMA: Use of road tax for campaign



KNP counsel Sixto Brillantes explains to reporters at the Comelec why he wants to intervene in the disqualification case filed against President Macapagal by Pro-Con for violating the air time limit imposed by the poll body.

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From page A1

Santiago said his complaint was based on his travels to Baguio, Cebu, Nueva Ecija, Bulacan and Metro Manila where he saw the proliferation of big billboards made of tarpaulin and plywood with sizes ranging from 2 feet by 8 feet to 4 feet by 8 feet.

Billboards

One billboard, painted with a blue background, carried the slogan "Kalsada Natin, Alagaan Natin." Others were painted "Programang Pangtrabaho ni GMA or Pangulong Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo" in yellow or white with the portrait of Ms Macapagal.

The portraits on the billboards, according to Santiago, are "exactly similar" to the photographs of Ms Macapagal in her campaign posters.

He also said that street sweepers wearing long-sleeved T-shirts bear the same slogans.

"(I) am aware that road maintenance is other than street-sweeping or billboards, hence this alleged 'programang pangtrabaho' and 'kalsada natin, alagaan natin' billboards are nothing but election posters or forms of election propaganda," Santiago said.

He said the road users' tax was supposed to be spent solely for road and drainage maintenance, installation of traffic lights, road safety devices and air pollution controls.

Boycott vehicle registration

In the same petition, Santiago said Soriquez admitted that he approved the project as early as October 2003. Because Cabinet secretaries were mere extensions of the presidency, the project could not have been approved without the knowledge of Ms Macapagal, according to Santiago.

"The raid on the treasury and the expenditure of P1.4 billion for plywood and tarpaulins to carry the election propaganda of the President of the Philippines are certainly criminal acts and deserve no less than her disqualification as a candidate and the death penalty for all the perpetrators," he said.

He also called on motorists to boycott the registration of their vehicles for the campaign period so that the administration would not be able to use their money for the campaign.

Other cases

Based on Comelec records, the first case was filed by a party-list group called AASJS which asked for Ms Macapagal's disqualification because she failed to fulfill her promise not to run in the 2004 elections.

The second case was filed by Antonio Villanueva, who was himself barred from running in the 2004 elections.

In his petition, Villanueva said that Ms Macapagal should resign from her post before running for the presidency to "level the playing field."

Third petition

The third petition was filed by M. Abdulaziz Paiso. He asked the Comelec to disqualify Ms Macapagal because she was barred by the Constitution from seeking a second term.

The fourth petition asked the Comelec to deny Ms Macapagal's candidacy because it lacked the necessary verification. The fifth was filed on March 15 by a lawyer who said that Ms Macapagal violated the Comelec resolution limiting the television advertisements of candidates.

The sixth petition was filed on March 24 by two lawyers who alleged that the President violated the Omnibus Election Law when she ordered the implementation of the enhanced Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office's Greater Medicare Access program.

Exceeded air time limit

The ruling administration party Lakas-CMD acknowledged that the President started airing her television advertisements on Jan. 5, more than a month before the start of the election campaign period on Feb. 10.

In a 16-page answer to the petition filed against Ms Macapagal alleging that she exceed-

ed the 120-minute limit set by the Comelec, lawyer Alberto Agra said that the 188 minutes logged for Ms Macapagal should not be solely credited to her.

"The 188 minutes from Jan. 5 to March 19, 2004 is allocated between respondent and Lakas-CMD, the payor of the ads," Agra said.

According to Agra, the ads were aired on five television stations with ABS-CBN getting 85 minutes, GMA 7 with 75 minutes, RPN 9 with 6.5 minutes, ABC 5 with three minutes and Studio 23 with 7.5 minutes.

Sixth firm

A sixth firm, TAPE Inc., was identified by Agra as another television firm which aired 11 minutes of Ms Macapagal's ads.

No violation

"Based on the foregoing, the rule on 120 television minutes per television or cable station was not violated. Even if under the rule of 120 total television minutes, no violation may be attributed to respondent since the 188 minutes may be equally apportioned between respondent and Lakas-CMD," the lawyer said.

Equal access

The answer was in response to the complaint of Jose Vicente B. Salazar, who alleged that Ms Macapagal had already logged 189 minutes of television time from Feb. 10 to March 11, 2004 in various stations.

Salazar, a member of Pro-Con(stitution), had pointed out that Ms Macapagal violated, not only Section 86 of the Fair Elections Act but also Comelec resolutions.

Based on Section 6 of Republic Act No. 9006 or the Fair Elections Act, all registered parties and bona fide candidates shall have equal access to media time and space.

The law also provides that each candidate or registered political party for a nationally elective office shall be entitled to not more than 120 minutes of television advertisement and 180 minutes of radio advertisement, while local candidates shall not have more than 60 minutes of television ads and 90 minutes of radio commercials.

On March 1, 2001, the Comelec reiterated this in a resolution, followed by Resolution No. 6520 issued on Jan. 6, 2004.

Comelec clarifies resolution

In both resolutions, the Comelec maintained the provision of the law which limited national candidates and political parties to an aggregate of only 120 minutes for all television or cable television and 180 minutes for all radio stations.

But the Comelec en banc—in excerpts from its Feb. 18, 2004 meeting—"clarified" that national political parties and candidates could now have 120 minutes for each television or cable station and 180 minutes each for each radio station.

"Considering that the law as stated herein did not categorically state that the 120 minutes of TV ads and 180 minutes of radio ads refer to all radio and TV stations, the commission resolved, as it hereby resolves, to amend and clarify Sec. 13 of Resolution no. 6520," the poll body said in the document.

Not published

Salazar said the Comelec resolution was not published because it was not valid.

But the Comelec has the power to regulate political advertisements as it has the constitutional and statutory authority to issue rules, according to Agra.

He claimed that the excerpt of the resolution, which clarified the limits of television advertisements, was printed and distributed by the Comelec's education and information department.

Agra argued that the Comelec, which is imbued with quasi-legislative powers, merely "clarified or interpreted" Section 6.2 of the Fair Election Law.

45-DAY CARAVAN

'Biyaheng Gloria' on road to victory

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo's "final road to victory" kicked off yesterday with a 45-day caravan and relay walkathon dubbed "Biyaheng Gloria," starting simultaneously in three key areas—Batanes, Kalibo and Zamboanga City—and converging in Metro Manila on the eve of the May 10 elections.

The caravan, initiated by a large umbrella organization supporting Ms. Macapagal, aims to present three million signatures to the President in support of her agenda for reforms, said the Genuine Leadership, Out-

standing Reform and Intelligent Action (Pro-Gloria).

The theme of the event, it said, is "Caravan kay Gloria: Isang Taya sa Kinabukasan."

Nora Aunor

Attended by superstar Nora Aunor, the caravan was launched at a press conference at the Kowloon Restaurant in Quezon City. Its organizers called on the other presidential candidates not to resort to false information and hysterics during the campaign.

The group also launched Resistensya, a voter education campaign against "information fraud, black propaganda and terrorism," as its answer to "Resist Fraud and Terrorism" (Resist) alliance among opposition presidential candidates and the leftist party-list group Bayan Muna.

Biyaheng Gloria spokesperson Robert Bastillo said the campaign for three million signatures for the President would go to the

grassroots all over Luzon, the Visayas and Mindanao. He said the caravan would stop at key juncture points to meet with people, and seek and consolidate their agenda for reforms.

"All of these will be presented to the President on the culmination day of the caravan," he said.

Bastillo expressed confidence it would generate overwhelming and "genuine support of the people seeking a strong leadership in the next six years" despite meager finances.

Pro-Gloria is composed of Bigkis Pinoy, Lakas Pinoy, Kaibigan ni Gloria, Kalipi, Aguman, Kaisambayan, Kaibigan ng OCWs, Akbay-Pinoy, Pinoy Overseas Party-list, Team Gloria (Youth), National Confederation of Tricycle Operators and Drivers Association of the Philippines, E-Gloria, Liga ng Magniniyog, Aggrupation and Alliance of Farmers and Fisherfolks, Kagabay ni Gloria (Women), United Filipino Organizations and Muslim Peace and Order Council.

FPJ-Ping unity talks still alive

By Norman Bordadora

IMUS, Cavite—Opposition presidential candidate Fernando Poe Jr. continues to insist on unification talks with opposition forces led by the other standard-bearer Sen. Panfilo Lacson and three emissaries have called the latter to schedule another one-on-one unity meeting.

The overtures came following the aborted meeting between the two leaders on March 9. Poe's running mate, Sen. Loren Legarda, has been the third emissary and Lacson seemed amenable to the idea of what could be the final round of unity talks going into the crucial second half of the national campaign. Lacson did not identify the other two.

"We never closed our doors," Lacson told reporters during the birthday celebration of a supporter, Cavite Gov. Ireneo Maliksi, here, his hometown. He said he just didn't like "the lack of courtesy" on the part of Poe's handlers.

Last-minute cancellation

"I don't want last minute cancellations after the schedule has been set. Other appointments are affected that way," Lacson added.

Legarda had said that she had reached out, in behalf of Poe, to the Lacson camp for the aborted one-on-one to push through.

Legarda took on the role of emissary between the two presidential candidates despite the possibility of having to give up her vice presidential bid for whoever would slide down between Lacson and Poe.

A one-on-one between Lacson and Poe was set on March 9 but was cancelled the day before. The Poe camp said the actor was miffed because Lacson leaked details of the scheduled talks to the media.

Lacson, however, said that it was not the actor but his "handlers" who cancelled the meeting at the last minute.

"It (suddenly) became apparent that they were going to ask me to withdraw. It's a good thing the meeting was called off. It would have just been a waste of time," Lacson said.

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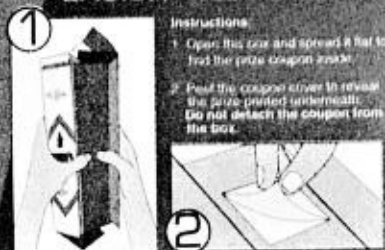
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Ralph's WINES SPIRITS

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HOW TO WIN: Buy any Gilbey's Gin 1 liter, 750ml and 375ml and look for the winning coupon inside and exchange the indicated prize on the coupon through designated outlets.

PRIZES AT STAKE: Gilbey's Gin 375ml (valued at P100.00) P100.00 cash prize. One brand new Mini-Cooper (valued at P1,000,000) cash prize.

HOW TO REDEEM YOUR PRIZES: For winning Gilbey's Gin 375ml and brand new Mini-Cooper, you may exchange it from any participating retail stores and supermarket.

Redemption:

For CASH PRIZE WINNERS: Call PETNET at 800-888-8888 (Western Union Money Transfer) to redeem your cash prize. For Mini-Cooper WINNERS: Call PETNET at 800-888-8888 (Western Union Money Transfer) to redeem your Mini-Cooper.

PETNET through Western Union Domestic Money Transfer will send the cash prize to you. Make sure you bring the following when claiming your cash prize: 1. The winning coupon attached to the Gilbey's Gin box where it was found. 2. Original and photocopy of your birth certificate. 3. Any of the following valid IDs: Passport, Driver's License, SSS, QES, PRC, Senior Citizen ID, New Voter ID. 4. If the above mentioned IDs are not available, you may bring any two of the following IDs: 1. ID, Employment ID, School ID, Major League Cards, etc. 5. Signature.

and expiry date to: Gilbey's VISA, Gilbey's Mastercard, Team Mastercard, Card ID, NBI Clearance, Police Clearance.

Please allow one hour for verification and processing when claiming your cash prize.

Remember when claiming your cash prize: 1. Do not detach the winning coupon from the box. 2. Do not detach the coupon from the box. 3. Do not detach the coupon from the box.

CASH PRIZE WINNERS: Call PETNET at 800-888-8888 (Western Union Money Transfer) to redeem your cash prize.

When claiming, bring the following: 1. The winning coupon attached to the Gilbey's Gin box where it was found. 2. Original and photocopy of your birth certificate. 3. Any of the following valid IDs: Passport, Driver's License, SSS, QES, PRC, Senior Citizen ID, New Voter ID. 4. If the above mentioned IDs are not available, you may bring any two of the following IDs: 1. ID, Employment ID, School ID, Major League Cards, etc. 5. Signature.

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HOW TO REDEEM YOUR PRIZES: For winning Gilbey's Gin 375ml and brand new Mini-Cooper, you may exchange it from any participating retail stores and supermarket.

When claiming, bring the following: 1. The winning coupon attached to the Gilbey's Gin box where it was found. 2. Original and photocopy of your birth certificate. 3. Any of the following valid IDs: Passport, Driver's License, SSS, QES, PRC, Senior Citizen ID, New Voter ID. 4. If the above mentioned IDs are not available, you may bring any two of the following IDs: 1. ID, Employment ID, School ID, Major League Cards, etc. 5. Signature.

The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Bush didn't protect US enough, says ex-aide

WASHINGTON—President George W. Bush's administration scaled back the fight against al-Qaida after taking office in 2001 and spurned suggestions that it retaliate for the bombing of a US warship "because it happened on the Clinton administration's watch," a former top terrorism adviser testified.

President Bill Clinton's administration had "no higher priority" than combating terrorists while the Bush administration made it "an important issue but not an urgent issue," said Richard Clarke, who advised both presidents. He

testified Wednesday before the commission investigating the Sept. 11 attacks, the worst terrorist strikes in American history.

Clarke's testimony turned what had been a painstaking, bipartisan probe of pre-Sept. 11 in-

telligence failures and bureaucratic miscommunications into a nationally televised criticism of Bush on the terrorism issue that he has made the core of his campaign for a new term.

The White House sought anew to undermine Clarke, the author of a new book critical of the president, identifying him as the senior official who had praised the president's antiterrorism efforts in an anonymous briefing for reporters the year

following the attacks.

"He needs to get his story straight," said Condoleezza Rice, Bush's national security adviser and Clarke's boss while he served in the administration.

Former Illinois Gov. Jim Thompson, a Republican, took up the president's cause inside the commission hearing. "We have your book and we have your press briefing of August 2002. Which is true?" he challenged the witness.

Clarke's testimony overshadowed the release of a commission staff report that said bureaucratic disagreements about the extent of the CIA's authority to kill Osama bin Laden hampered efforts to eliminate al-Qaida's leader during the Clinton era. The result was a continued reliance on local forces in Afghanistan that all sides recognized reduced the chance of success, both before and after Bush took office, the report added.



AP CLARKE

Testimony undermines reelection bid of Bush

WASHINGTON—From the moment Richard Clarke slipped into the witness chair, his credibility was on trial—and the verdict could weigh heavily on President George W. Bush's reelection prospects.

"To those who are here in the room, to those who are watching on television, your government failed you," the top counterterrorism official for Presidents Bill Clinton and George W. Bush told families of the Sept. 11 victims. "Those entrusted with protecting you failed you, and I failed you."

But the flash of humility swiftly gave way to damning testimony that cut to the heart of Bush's reelection strategy. Addressing a bipartisan panel, Clarke said the Bush administration failed to show proper urgency toward terrorism before Sept. 11, 2001, and softened America's approach to al-Qaida.

It didn't take long for the White House and its allies to realize they had a problem on their hands.

"It stunts the momentum Bush was picking up," said Republican consultant Keith Appell of Washington. "Any president or candidate for president has to maintain their credibility."

Especially on a signature issue. And the war on terrorism is Bush's political bread and butter.

Public trust in the president's judgment was relatively high after the terrorist attacks and spiked up again during the Iraq war. But the percentage of people who trust Bush has fallen below 50 percent in some polls since the war with Iraq. The president's job approval rating dipped sharply after weapons inspector David Kay said in January that he did not believe there were weapons of mass destruction in Iraq.

With his credibility under further assault by Clarke, Bush and his allies tried to turn the tables. They accused Clarke of rewriting history to sell copies of his tell-all book.

Even before Clarke spoke, there was an attempt to preempt his testimony. The Bush White House has a history of attacking those who attack the president. The list includes Gen. Eric Shinseki, who told Congress that postwar Iraq would require a massive presence of US troops; former Ambassador Joseph Wilson, who questioned Bush's use of US intelligence; and Richard Foster, who differed with the White House on the cost of Bush's prescription drug plan.

Bush's allies say Clarke gave the White House no choice.

"They can't just sit there and take a beating," said Glen Bolger, a Republican pollster in Alexandria, Virginia. "They've got to come out and respond to this guy. In a case like Clarke, it's easier when history is on your side."

Appell, the Republican consultant who said Clarke's testimony hurt Bush in the short run, said he believed Democrat John Kerry's problems with credibility eventually will overcome any damage done to Bush. Leading with a multimillion TV ad campaign, Bush is trying to cast his Democratic rival as a flip-flopping opportunist.

"I still think people will look to Bush as the one who best protects us in a time of war and leads that war against terrorists," Appell said.

With the economy ailing, Bush wants to keep voters focused on the threat of terrorism. Polls consistently show that while a majority of voters think Kerry is best suited to create jobs, most trust Bush to protect the country. AP

Iraq war hero struggles to find peace at home

FORT CAMPBELL, Kentucky—In combat, Army Spc. Dwayne Turner was a hero. Back home from Iraq, his life has been in shambles.

Just last month, the 101st Airborne Division soldier was honored with the prestigious Silver Star medal for saving at least two lives in combat. Today, he is out of the Army, driving a borrowed car and sleeping at a friend's house.

The smile he beamed at the medal ceremony masked months of problems he says has battled since returning home with battle wounds: a suicide attempt along with flashbacks and nightmares so bad he resorted to binge drinking to fall asleep.

"I kind of felt like I was blowing in the wind pretty much," said Turner, 23, of Indianapolis, who was an Army medic.

He wound up going AWOL for two days and smoking marijuana while drunk. That, he says, resulted in a general discharge from the Army rather than an honorable discharge, and left him ineligible for college funding. The Army also demoted him from specialist to private before his discharge.

The Army said it would not comment on the circumstances surrounding Turner's discharge because it was an administrative issue.

"He is a bona fide hero. He saved two lives without question," said Brig. Gen. Frank Helmick, who awarded Turner the Silver Star, the third highest award given for actions in combat.

After returning to Fort Campbell, Turner said Army...



TURNER

Trists diagnosed him with acute stress disorder and post-traumatic stress. He was set to get out of the Army on a medical discharge, he said.

Last summer, things got worse for Turner. His grandfather died and he was having problems with his ex-wife, the mother of his 2-year-old son.

Everything was too much to handle, and he was declared AWOL from the Army. Drinking one night, he contemplated suicide and cut his wrist, but changed his mind and treated the wound himself. And drunk at a party, he said, he smoked a cigar that he said he didn't know was stuffed with marijuana.

Turner's mother, Barbara Turner, of Indianapolis, said the Army should have given her son an honorable discharge. "He's a nice guy and I think..." she said. AP

ELECTRIC SERVICE IN THESE AREAS WILL BE MOMENTARILY INTERRUPTED FOR FACILITIES UPGRADING AND OTHER LINE WORK.

MAINTENANCE SCHEDULE

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MONDAY TO TUESDAY, MARCH 29-30, 2004

QUEZON (LUCENA CITY, TAYABAS AND MAUBAN)

BETWEEN 11:00PM (MON., 03/29/04) AND 4:00AM (TUE., 03/30/04) - THE WHOLE OF CIRCUITS TAYABAS 42ZY; AND MAUBAN 31XR

Portion of D. Andres, Gen. Luna, A. Dela Cruz Sts. and Lucena Provincial Road from Meralco-Tayabas substation in Bgy. Matino to National Highway in Bgy. Calumpang including Inter Town Subd., Bgys. Iplian, Malawa and Ibabang Bukal in Tayabas.

Portion of Provincial Road from Bgy. Matino in Tayabas to Sitio Balaybalay in Mauban including Bgys. Lacawan, Palate, Maite, Masin and Iltan in Tayabas; Bgy. San Miguel and Sitio Liwayway in Mauban.

Portion of National Highway from Provincial Road in Bgy. Calumpang, Tayabas to Dalahican Road including SM City-Lucena including Villa Lopez, Sta. Isabel Village and Wellman Villa in Bgy. Isabang, Tayabas; J. N. Oil Industries, Alana Motors, Unidco Consolidated, Hermosa Fausta Subd., Puerto Del Mar Subd., Better Living Subd., Ciudad Maharlika, Rosano Village, St. Alfonsius Subd., Immaculate Conception Subd., Lourdes Subd. in Bgy. Isabang, Lucena City; Pleasantville Subd., Torres Subd., Quezon National High School, Rodriguez Park and Jael Subd. in Bgy. Iyam; and Bgy. Ibabang Talim.

Portion of Allairey St. and Quezon Ave. from Gen. Lucban St. in Bgy. Iyam to L. F. Teachers' Subd. in Bgy. Cotta including Evangelista, Granja Sts., PNR Ave., Lucena Capitol Bldg., Bel-Air Subd., Sacred Heart College, Purok Matahimik, St. Jude Parish, Ben Tuan Oil Mfg. and Senbel.

REASON: Preventive maintenance work inside Meralco-Tayabas substation.

TUESDAY, MARCH 30, 2004

QUEZON PROVINCE (PAGBILAO)

BETWEEN 12:01AM AND 4:00AM - THE WHOLE OF CIRCUIT PAGBILAO 11WD

Portion of Maharlika Highway from near Meramar Village in Bgy. Daungan to Bgy. Silangan Maliboy including Municipal Demonstration Farm and Training Center, Margarita Heights Subd., Pantalan ng Pagbilao; Bgy. Ikin, Polaris Coco Products and Bgy. Pinagbayan.

REASON: Maintenance work inside Meralco-Pagbilao substation.

RIZAL (CAINTA)

BETWEEN 12:01AM AND 12:30AM AND THEN BETWEEN 4:30AM AND 5:00AM - PORTION OF CIRCUITS CAINTA 42XG AND 46XG

Portion of Ortigas Ave. Ext. from Meralco-Cainta substation in front of Sergio's Compound to and including Robinson's Big R Supercenter.

Portion of Ortigas Ave. Ext. from Park Place to Don Mariano Subd. including Viriane Subd., Bayanhan Village, Brookside Hills Subd., Youngtown and St. Francis Subd.

BETWEEN 12:01AM AND 5:00AM - PORTION OF CIRCUITS CAINTA 42XG AND 46XG

Portion of Ortigas Ave. Ext. from Mercury Drug in Cainta Junction to near Park Place Village including 7-11 Store, STI, Rublud. Bldg. and Little Caesar's Pizza in Cainta Junction.

REASON: Relocation of primary facilities along Ortigas Ave. Ext. affected by DPWH road widening project.

LAGUNA (SAN PEDRO)

BETWEEN 8:30AM AND 2:30PM - PORTION OF CIRCUIT SAN PEDRO 42WH

Portion of Macaria Ave. from near Pacita Ave. to Noel Drive including Pacita Complex Subd. Phase 3-B, Family Clinic Hospital, Evangelista Medical Specialist Hospital, Noel Homes Subd. and Las Villas de Manila.

REASON: Various maintenance work along Macaria Ave. in Pacita Complex Subd., San Pedro, Laguna.

BULACAN (SAN JOSE DEL MONTE)

BETWEEN 9:00AM AND 2:00PM - PORTION OF CIRCUIT SAPANG PALAY 32YO

Along Quirino Highway from Igay Cockpit to and including Francisco Homes in Sapang Palay.

REASON: Relocation of primary lines to give way to DPWH road widening project along Quirino Highway corner Igay Road in Sapang Palay, San Jose Del Monte, Bulacan.

CAVITE (BACOR AND KAWIT)

BETWEEN 9:00AM AND 3:00PM - PORTION OF CIRCUIT BACOR 413WX

Along Gen. Evangelista St. from near Gregoria St. to Agunald Highway including Bos. Talaba, Digman, Tabing Dagat, Alima, Sinaguelasan, Balala, Bacor Memorial Garden, Bacor Municipal Hall, Bacor United Church in Bacor; Bos. Marulas, Palamitan, DENR-EMB Region 4, Island Cove and Emiliano Toria Tronza High School in Kawit.

REASON: Various maintenance work along Gen. Evangelista St. in Bacor and Kawit, Cavite.

BULACAN (SAN MIGUEL)

BETWEEN 9:30AM AND 2:30PM - PORTION OF CIRCUIT SAN MIGUEL 34YN

Along Provincial Road from Cagayan Valley Road to Ting Bgys. Madiun, Sibul, Masalipit, Tataro, Impang, Malibay, Balukok, Santa Ines, balaog, Luman, Partida, Mayanin, Lamhakin, Sta. Lucia, Pinalat, rani, Cahin, Robina, Hills and Soto Baniog.

REASON: Various maintenance work along Provincial Road in Bgy. Camias, San Miguel, Bulacan.

TUESDAY TO WEDNESDAY, MARCH 30-31, 2004

TUMAWAG SA MERALO REFUND HOTLINE 1622-8888/632-8888 o MAG-EMAIL SA refund@meralo.com.ph.

MAARI DIN MAG-TEXT SA POWERTEXT (Type in MERALCO and send to 2366) PARA SA KARAGDAGANG IMPORMASYON.

Madrid, Milan, Normads, Rome, New York, Amsterdam, Munich, Hamburg, Anchorage, Copenhagen, Melbourne, Calcutta, Cairo, Florence, Toledo, Jerusalem, Iraq, Israel, Tehran Sts. and Main Ave. in Bgy. Merville.

Portion of Edison Ave., Quirino St. and Daly Road from West Service Road of South Super Highway to and including Belvedere, Roxas, Magsaysay, Garcia, Molave Sts., South Admiral Village, Cubic Subd., Camella Homes-Nichols and Molave Park Subd. in Bgy. Merville.

BETWEEN 8:00AM AND 3:00PM - PORTION OF CIRCUIT SUN VALLEY 425WG-43WG

Along Montclair St. and Merville Ave. from Valentine St. to and including Air Transportation Office - MIA Radar Station, Miascor Catering Services and Mahatma Gandhi Educational Foundation in Bgy. Merville.

REASON: Various maintenance work along Montclair St. and Merville Ave. in Bgy. Merville, Parañaque City.

LAGUNA (SAN PABLO CITY) AND QUEZON PROVINCE (TIAONG)

BETWEEN 8:30AM AND 4:30PM - PORTION OF CIRCUIT SAN PABLO II 45WJ

Portion of PNR Rail Road Track from near Maharlika Highway in Bgy. Soledad, San Pablo City to near Labasin River in Bgy. Laling, Tiaong including Bos. San Francisco, Sta. Maria, San Joaquin, Sta. Ana, San Antonio II and Sto. Rosario.

REASON: Replacement of rotten pole along PNR railroad track in San Pablo City, Laguna and Tiaong, Quezon Province.

LAGUNA (MAJAYAJAY)

BETWEEN 10:00AM AND 4:00PM - THE WHOLE OF CIRCUIT BOTOCAN 21D

Portion of Laguna Cross Country and Provincial Road from Meralco-Botocan substation to Majayjay-Liliw boundary including Villa Nogales, Gozo Subd., Bgys. Bakia, May-It, Banga, Sta. Catalina, Malinao, Muralao, Panglian and Majayjay Town Proper.

REASON: Various repair and maintenance work inside Meralco-Botocan substation.

LAGUNA (STA. CRUZ AND PILA)

BETWEEN 8:00AM AND 8:30AM - THE WHOLE OF CIRCUITS STA. CRUZ 32WF, 33WF, 34WF AND 35WF

The whole town of Sta. Cruz and Pila.

REASON: NPC-Transco repair work inside Transco-Kalayayan substation.

WEDNESDAY TO THURSDAY

MARCH 31 - APRIL 1, 2004

NAVOTAS

BETWEEN 11:30PM AND 12:00MN (WED., 03/31/04) AND THEN BETWEEN 4:00AM AND 4:30AM (THU., 04/01/04) - PORTION OF CIRCUIT MALABON 53YD

Along Daang Hari St. from near Mariano Naval St. to near Manila Bay including Pambihira Patis and portion of Tangos NHA Housing Project in Bgy. Daang Hari.

BETWEEN 11:30PM (WED., 03/31/04) AND 4:30AM (THU., 04/01/04) - PORTION OF CIRCUIT MALABON 53YD

Along Gov. A. Pascual St. from near Daang Hari St. to and including Immaculate Garden Memorial Park, P. Pascual, Union, Jewel, E. Pascual, Rep. Ignacio Sts. and Ong Ta Lead Factory in Bgy. Daang Hari.

REASON: Various maintenance work along Gov. A. Pascual St. in Bgy. Daang Hari, Navotas.

THURSDAY, APRIL 1, 2004

BULACAN (PAOMBONG AND CALUMPIT)

BETWEEN 12:01AM AND 12:30AM AND THEN BETWEEN 4:30AM AND 5:00AM - PORTION OF CIRCUIT CALUMPIT 322YQ

Along Santo Rosario Road from McArthur Highway to near Bgy. Santo Rosario including Royal Estate Dream Crest, San Marcos Feed Supply and Bgy. Longos in Calumpit.

BETWEEN 12:01AM AND 5:00AM - PORTION OF CIRCUIT CALUMPIT 322YQ

Paombong Town Proper, Bgys. Santo Rosario, San Isidro, San Vicente, San Jose, Malumot, San Roque, Kut-Kut, Lantad, Binaklod, Masukol, Pugad and Sta. Cruz in Paombong.

REASON: Construction work along Malolos-Calumpit 13.8-kV lines.

RIZAL (SAN MATEO)

BETWEEN 9:00AM AND 1:00PM - PORTION OF CIRCUIT PARANG 414YL

Along AFP Road from Sitio Buntong Palay to and including Army Road, Langka, Tierra Monte Phases II and IV-A, AFP Village and Sta. Barbara Subd. in San Mateo.

REASON: Replacement of rotten poles along AFP Road in San Mateo, Rizal.

QUEZON PROVINCE (TIAONG AND SAN ANTONIO)

BETWEEN 9:00AM AND 2:00PM - THE WHOLE OF CIRCUIT TIAONG 11WE

Bgys. Quilpot, Ayusan 1 and 2, Tamisan, San Agustin and Bula in Tiaong.

The whole town of San Antonio.

REASON: Preventive maintenance work inside Meralco-Tiaong substation.

SUNDAY, APRIL 4, 2004

LAGUNA (LOS BAÑOS)

BETWEEN 8:00AM AND 5:00PM - THE WHOLE OF CIRCUIT LOS BAÑOS 31WT

Portion of PNR Railroad Track from near National Highway to and including Pleasant Village, Hillshoe Village, J. P. Rizal School, Bo. San Antonio, Putho and Tuntungin in Los Baños.

REASON: NPC-Transco repair work inside NPC-Makban substation.

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PATULOY ANG REFUNDI

Group calls for 'wise intefadeh'

RAMALLAH, West Bank — Sixty prominent Palestinian officials and intellectuals on Thursday urged the public to refrain from retaliation for Israel's assassination of Hamas' spiritual leader, saying it would ignite a new round of bloodshed that would only hurt Palestinian aspirations for independence.

The group called on the public to "rise again in a peaceful, wise intefadeh (uprising)." While saying the 37-year occupation must be brought down, they asked the public to reconsider the benefits of a violent struggle.

A half-page advertisement in the PLO's Al-Ayyam newspaper called on Palestinians to lay down their arms and turn to peaceful means of protest to end Israel's occupation of the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The ad reflected growing sentiment among many Palestinian leaders and intellectuals that military struggle is not helping the Palestinian cause. Thousands of Palestinians have died during three and a half years of fighting with Israel.

Hamas' founder, Sheik Ahmed Yassin, was killed in an Israeli air strike on Monday, prompting an outpouring of outrage on Palestinian streets.

Hamas says it won't attack US but will target Sharon

GAZA CITY, Gaza Strip—Hamas leaders said they are not targeting the United States in retaliation for Israel's assassination of their founder, but would hit back at Israel and target Prime Minister Ariel Sharon for death.

In new violence late Wednesday, several Israeli tanks moved back into an area of the Khan Younis refugee camp in southern Gaza where some structures were razed a day earlier, residents said.

Military sources, speaking on condition of anonymity, said it was a similar, limited operation. An Israeli helicopter fired a missile at a group of militants, residents said, and a policeman was wounded. Palestinians said 15 buildings were wholly or partly demolished.

Early Thursday, Israeli forces withdrew from the area, a military spokesperson said.

With a huge rally Wednesday, Palestinians in Gaza marked the end of a three-day mourn-

ing period for Sheik Ahmed Yassin, killed in an Israeli helicopter missile attack.

The new Hamas leader in Gaza, Abdel Aziz Rantisi, backed away from earlier threats of attacks against the United States, as did another Hamas leader in Gaza, Mahmoud Zahar.

Immediately after the Monday missile strike, Hamas' military wing, Izzedine al Qassam, said it held the United States responsible for Yassin's death because of its support for Israel, and that "all the Muslims of the world will be honored to join in the retaliation for this crime."

US officials said they took the Hamas threats seriously, and the state department repeated a warning to American citizens to stay out of Gaza.

However, Rantisi, a 56-year-old pediatrician, told reporters Wednesday the group is not interested in exporting its activities.

"We are inside Palestinian land and acting

only inside Palestinian land. We are resisting the occupation, nothing else," Rantisi said. "Our resistance will continue just inside our border, here inside our country."

Hamas believes that Israel belongs to the Muslims.

Another Gaza Hamas leader, Mahmoud Zahar, said Americans had nothing to fear from Hamas. "You are people innocent of the Zionist conspiracy that is fooling you and is stealing your money. You are not our target," he said.

AP



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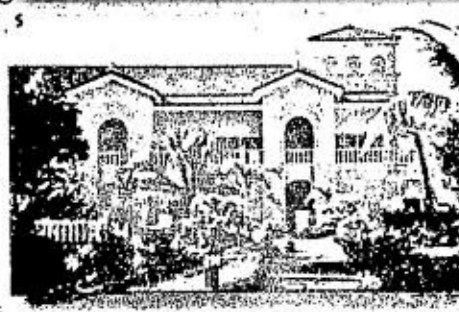
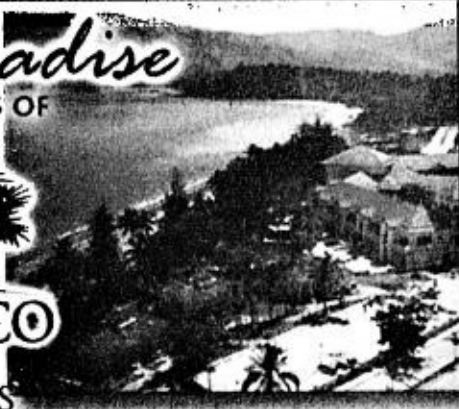
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Besieged Taiwan president softens stance on China

TAIPEI—Taiwanese leader Chen Shui-bian on Thursday pledged to be more flexible in improving relations with rival China, as he sought to ease a political crisis over his razor-thin reelection victory and the opposition's demands for a recount.

Meanwhile, Vice President Annette Lu appealed for US help in calming the political turmoil, urging Washington to quickly congratulate Chen for Saturday's victory. America's reluctance to congratulate the president has bolstered the opposition's claims that the vote was flawed.

Chen's remarks were among the first he has made about the touchy China issue since the controversial vote last Saturday. Chen's slim victory is being contested by the challenger, Lien Chan, who says the voting was marred by irregularities and an unexplained election-eve shooting that lightly wounded the president.

During the campaign, Chen adopted a confrontational stance with China, this island's biggest security threat. The two sides split amid civil war in 1949, and Beijing has demanded the island unify eventually or face war.

Lien has pushed a more conciliatory line with Beijing, and successfully urged supporters to boycott a ballot question that Chen championed asking whether Taiwan should beef up its military against the threat of China. Beijing strongly opposed the referendum, also held Saturday, considering it a dress rehearsal for an independence vote.

Chen's critics have said that the president would take an even harder line against China during his second term. But on Thursday, Chen said this wasn't true.

"The March 20 election was my last battle, so I have a freer hand to do things," Chen said.

Although Lien has provided little specific evidence of wrongdoing in Saturday's election, large crowds of his supporters have rallied in front of the Presidential Office daily, at first demanding a recount and more recently calling for a redo of the election.

Days of wrangling between political parties appeared to produce some progress on Thursday toward resolving the controversy. Legislators decided to begin cross-party negotiations on Friday about amending an election law so that it would trigger a recount if a candidate wins with a victory margin of less than one percent. The law would apply retroactively to Saturday's vote.

But it was still unclear how serious the lawmakers were about cooperating. Earlier efforts have quickly dissolved.

Chen met Thursday with business leaders and said in televised remarks afterward that he wanted to begin mending the relationship with China and that this would become easier in a second term unencumbered by reelection pressures.

He said that on Friday he would keep his campaign promise and begin setting up a special task force of officials, academics and business leaders who would discuss ways to improve ties with China.

Chinese leaders have refused to talk to Chen until he agrees that Taiwan is an inseparable part of China. The Taiwanese president has objected to setting such a precondition to talks.

Chen's Democratic Progressive Party believes that Taiwan is an independent country and that only the Taiwanese can approve any change in the nation's status. AP



OVERHEAD view taken from KMT headquarters shows supporters of defeated Kuomintang presidential candidate, Lien Chan, continuing their protest on the street leading to the Presidential Office (background) in Taipei.

APF

Court deliberates on impeachment amid protests

SEOUL—South Korea's Constitutional Court began unprecedented legal deliberation Thursday over whether to unseat President Roh Moo-hyun following his impeachment by the National Assembly amid widespread protests at the capital.

It was the second closed-door meeting of the nine-member court since the opposition-controlled assembly voted on March 12 to impeach Roh, suspending his presi-

dential powers. But justices were to start discussing legal points in the case for the first time.

"Until now, we have discussed procedural matters. Today we will actually start deliberating on the case itself," judge Choo Sun-hoe told reporters before entering the court house.

The case is the country's first-ever presidential impeachment trial, and Choo said the judges were also reviewing instances in

which heads of state have been impeached overseas.

Last week, the court summoned Roh to attend the first public hearing scheduled for March 30. But the embattled leader has refused to testify in his own defense.

During Thursday's deliberations, the court was expected to discuss whether it will still convene the March 30 public hearing as scheduled. The court has a maximum of six months to decide

whether to unseat the suspended president or dismiss the parliamentary impeachment and restore Roh's presidential powers.

The National Assembly needs at least six judges to uphold its vote to impeach Roh.

Roh was impeached for alleged election law violations and incompetence. Prime Minister Goh Kun has assumed Roh's presidential duties while the court weighs the case. AP

WORLD BRIEFS

50 terrorists killed

ISLAMABAD, Pakistan—More than 50 terrorists have been killed in Pakistan's largest military operation yet against suspected al-Qaida fighters and local sympathizers in its tribal areas bordering Afghanistan, the interior minister said Thursday. Interior Minister Faisal Saleh Hayyat vowed that the operation in South Waziristan, which began 10 days ago, would continue until the "complete elimination" of terrorists holed up there. AP

GI dies in Iraq

BAGHDAD—Insurgents attacked a US patrol north of Baghdad and a gun battle left a soldier and three rebels dead, the military said Thursday. The fighting occurred Wednesday near the town of Taji, about 20 km north of Baghdad, said Brig. Gen. Mark Kimmitt, the US military's deputy director of operations. A US soldier was also wounded, he said. He gave no other details. AP

Sino-Japan row

TOKYO—Protests broke out in China near Japanese diplomatic compounds on Thursday, as Japanese police questioned seven Chinese activists arrested for landing on a remote island held by Tokyo. The demonstrations came as Tokyo and Beijing issued competing claims of ownership over the island, moves that threatened to deepen a century-old territorial row. About 20 to 30 Chinese tore and burned Japanese flags outside Japan's Embassy in Beijing, demanding that Japanese authorities release the seven Chinese activists arrested on Uotsuri Island on Wednesday. In Hong Kong, a top pro-Beijing political party rallied about two dozen protesters to march on the Japanese Consulate-General, where they handed an official letter addressed to Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi. Uotsuri Island is part of an uninhabited chain in the East China Sea known as the Senkaku in Japan and Diaoyu Islands in China. Japan took control of the islands when it defeated China in an 1895 war. The United States had jurisdiction over them after World War II until 1972, when they were handed back to Japan. China says its claims date back centuries. AP

Antitax author indicted

LAS VEGAS—A federal grand jury indicted an anti-tax author and two others for helping thousands of taxpayers file bogus returns. Irwin Schiff, who wrote "The Federal Mafia: How It Illegally Imposes and Unlawfully Collects Income Taxes," argues there is no legal requirement to pay income taxes. Government lawyers have been pursuing civil actions to bar him from selling his book and holding tax seminars. "There is no magic way out of paying taxes," Eileen O'Connor, assistant US attorney general for the tax division in Washington, D.C., said Wednesday. AP

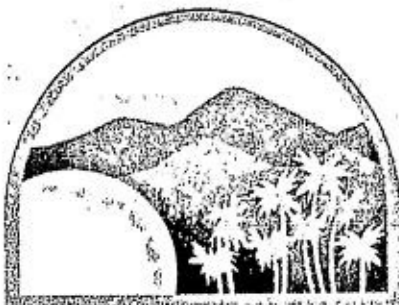
Cost of losing crown

LUMBERTON, North Carolina—A former Miss North Carolina who was stripped of her title after an ex-boyfriend threatened to release nude pictures of her testified that the scandal cost her \$20,000 to \$30,000 in appearance fees. Rebekah Revels, who won the crown in June 2002, has sued former boyfriend Tosh Welch for invasion of privacy, interfering with a contract and afflicting emotional distress. Revels is asking Welch to pay compensatory damages for lost income and punitive damages. A month after Revels won the state pageant, Welch sent an e-mail to Miss America officials, threatening to publicize topless photos of Revels. The state pageant asked Revels to resign. Revels also has sued the Miss North Carolina and Miss America organizations. AP

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Nobel Peace laureate visits Texas death row inmate

LIVINGSTON, Texas—Nobel Peace Prize laureate Desmond Tutu visited an inmate on Texas' death row, saying it would be "one of the greatest tragedies" if the man was executed and describing capital punishment as an "absurdity that brutalizes society."

The South African archbishop spent nearly two hours Wednesday with Dominique Green, sentenced to die for the slaying of a man during a robbery outside a convenience store more than 12 years ago.

"I come away deeply enriched by my encounter with an extraordinary young man," Tutu said. "I have met quite a few people in my

time, but I have not been as impressed by someone I've met very briefly through a glass partition... He is a remarkable young man."

"It would be one of the greatest tragedies if someone like Dominique would be executed."

Tutu called capital punishment a perverse way to show respect for life and an "absurdity that brutalizes society."

"I am very concerned for a people that I love very much," he said. "You are one of the most generous peoples in the world, Americans... but I find that very difficult to square that with a remarkable vindictiveness which doesn't square with your incredible generosity."

Green was 19 in 1993 when a jury decided he should receive lethal injection for the fatal shooting of Andrew Lastrapes Jr., 41, who was gunned down while parking his truck in Houston. Lastrapes became one of 10 people robbed during a three-day crime spree authorities said Green was involved in.

Two other men received lesser prison terms for robbery. A fourth man was not charged.

During his trial, Green was described as a crack cocaine dealer with an extensive juvenile record for weapons and drug offenses and burglaries.

Green's supporters include historian and best-selling author

Thomas Cahill, whose friendship with Tutu helped expedite Wednesday's session with the archbishop.

The supporters believe Green's trial was marked by racism, that his court-appointed lawyer was incompetent and that he was the product of a dysfunctional family that jurors did not consider. Green and two of his companions are black. The man who was not charged was white. An all-white jury decided Green's fate.

Appeals in his case have been filed to the US Supreme Court, his lawyers said Wednesday. No execution date has been set.

"It's definitely been an experience," Green said of his session

with Tutu. "He told me enlightening and inspirational things... It definitely gave me a lot to think about. I don't really know how to describe it. It's just one of those moments in life you refer to."

Green would not discuss his case because it is on appeal.

Green was inspired initially by Tutu's book about his experiences as president of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission, set up after the country's first all-race elections in 1994 to help heal the wounds of decades of oppressive white-minority rule. Tutu won the Nobel Peace Prize for his nonviolent resistance to apartheid.

"I look at him as a person who

has been able to make a difference, and I can make a difference on other people's lives," Green said. "The goal is to get a new trial. My hope is to just inspire people to want to make a difference. It's something I didn't have till I got here."

Green said he had enrolled but never attended the University of Houston, hoping to study law or psychology.

"Unfortunately, I came here," he said, speaking from a small cage in the visiting area outside death row. "In my opinion, this place has given me more than college could, except the price for this college is not one I would like to pay."

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NO PLATES, NO TRAVEL POLICY



Background
NAKTF identified the reinvigoration of the implementation of the "NO PLATES, NO TRAVEL" POLICY as prescribed by Republic Act (RA) 4136 or "The Land Transportation and Traffic Code". RA 4136 clearly states, "No motor vehicles shall be used or operated on or upon any public highway of the Philippines unless the same is properly registered for the current year."

General Guidelines

- The Land Transportation Office (LTO) shall be the lead agency in the implementation of the "No Plates, No Travel" Policy. Implementing units shall include the LTO, PNP Traffic Management Group (PNP TMG) and the MMDA Traffic Enforcement Group (TEG).
- The provisions set in RA 4136 or "The Land Transportation and Traffic Code" shall act as the overall guidance in the implementation of the policy. Other pertinent laws and other issuances presently enforced in relation thereto shall continue to steer the conduct of the implementation, unless otherwise revised/repealed.
- The "No Plates, No Travel" Policy shall be enforced initially in NCR, region 3 and region 4 beginning March 10, 2004.
- Strict adherence to Human Rights shall be emphasized in all undertakings.
- The NAKTF Chief shall exercise overall supervision in the implementation.

Procedural Guidelines

- It is NAKTF's primary intention in the reinvigoration of the "No Plates, No Travel" Policy to check vehicles with the following liabilities but continue to travel the streets, as they may easily be used in criminal activities:

- Without License Plates
- With Expired Conduction Stickers
- Government Vehicles Without License Plates

- Owned by Government Officials Without Plates
- With Fake Plates
- With Illegally transferred Plates
- With Unauthorized Plates
- With Unauthorized Commemorative Plates
- With Expired Commemorative Plates

- The following procedures should apply in the implementation of the "No Plates, No Travel" Policy.

- Vehicles without plates that do not have the necessary documentation (Official Receipt / Certificate Of Registration) shall be IMPOUNDED by the apprehending law enforcers.

Vehicles using Conduction Stickers but have original customer's copy of Sales Invoice and/or Delivery Receipt shall be given a WARNING/REMINDER to complete the registration of the vehicles before driving them on the road. Final regulation governing conduction stickers shall be implemented upon approval of the Department order pertaining to its usage.

- Vehicles that have been issued license plates but continue to use conduction stickers or intentionally remove the same shall be FINED in accordance with the provisions of RA4136. Law enforcers shall make notations on the documents presented by accosted motorists to minimize their inconvenience and for the reference of subsequent accosting law enforcers.
- In special cases, the movement of vehicles from dealer to dealer, dealer to showroom, dealer to warehouse, dealer to factory, the documents required are gate pass with specific destination, driver's license and authorized company ID.
- Motorcycles without license plates shall not be impounded until April 15, 2004, provided they have proper documentation (Official Receipt / Certificate Of Registration).
- Utmost courtesy should be observed among law enforcers.
- The inspection of documents should be as brief as possible to avoid inconveniencing motorists and obstructing the continuous flow of traffic.

We request for the public to fully support the implementation of the "No Plates, No Travel" Policy.

ANGELO T. REYES

Presidential Adviser and Chief, NAKTF

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Too much

TECHNICALLY, the local races began yesterday, although everyone knows they unofficially began when the presidential race started. Still, the candidates who "spontaneously" showed up during presidential campaign rallies can now campaign on their own.

The intrigue and glitter of the presidential campaign have served to obscure the local races. However, it is the elections for seats in the House of Representatives down to Sangguniang Bayan that will crucially affect the chances of the various presidential aspirants—as well as the success or failure of whoever ends up president. Election-related violence statistics alone point to the ferocity of local elections, in which candidates in many cases literally wage a life or death struggle for supremacy. In the most underdeveloped parts of the country, guns, goons and gold continue to be the primary characteristics of our democracy.

The cost in lives, money and misery of our local campaigns is based on the need for local politicians to prove they can deliver. It is only by being able to deliver votes that they will be courted by the national government after the elections. The cost of such deliveries, is, of course, too much. For it places national governance at the mercy of the most backward, ruthless and cynical members of our political class. At the same time, there are rays of hope in some provinces where dependency on Manila is being abandoned for self-empowerment by provinces determined to progress despite the difficulties being faced by the rest of the country.

It is this strange duality—of local elections hopelessly mired in feudal, bloody, corrupt politics on one hand, and dynamic localities in which issues are discussed and progressive candidates and parties flourish, on the other hand—that demonstrates the fluidity of our present political circumstances. In some cases, progressive leaders revert to Mafia-style tactics during the elections. In other cases, stunning upsets happen in which entrenched dynasties are kicked out, and new, more enlightened leaders emerge. But on the whole, the kingpins, warlords and dynasts who operate the levers of power are setting the stage for their being able to dominate the political agenda of the next administration.

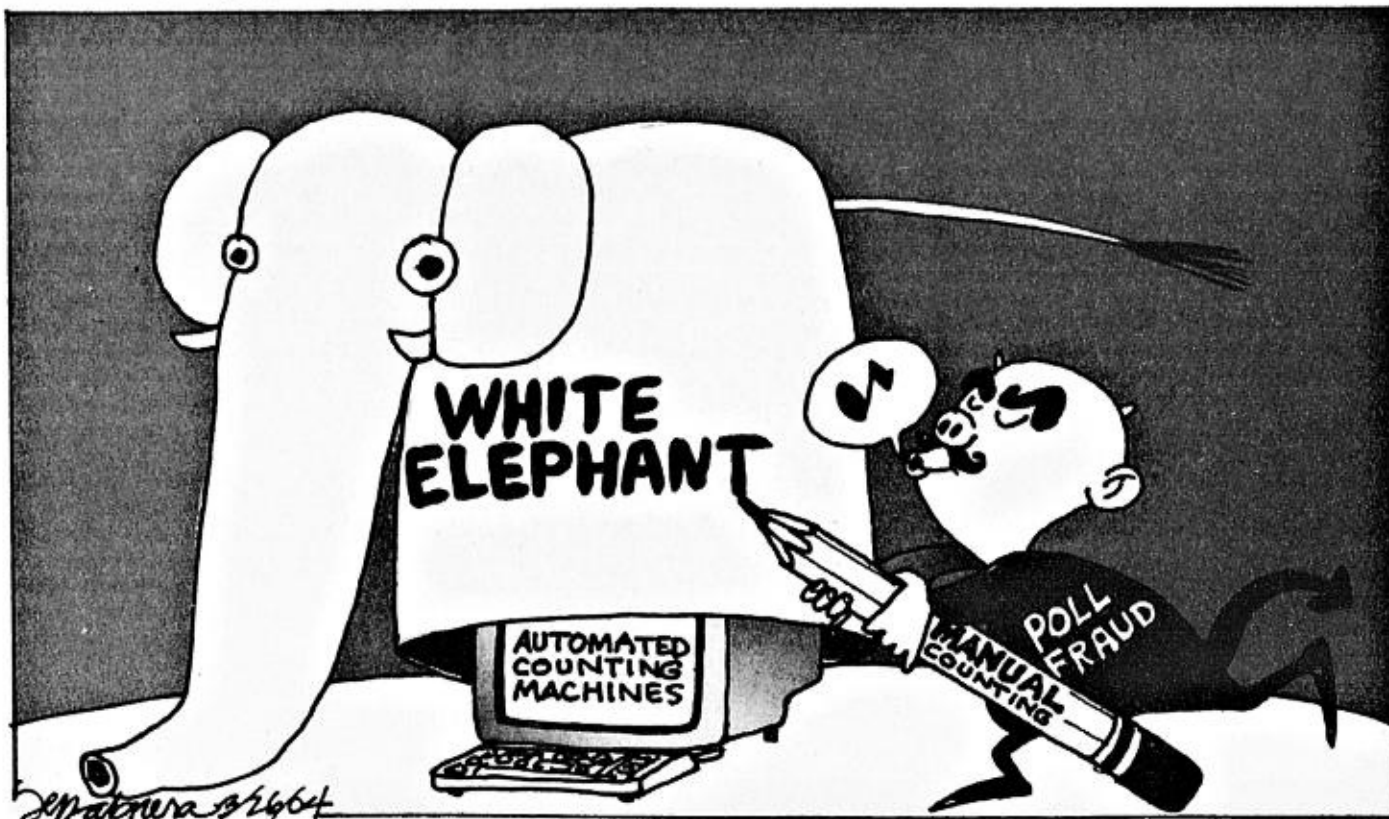
The ruling Lakas-CMD, for example, is suffering from the liability of all past dominant political parties: that of having too many party members contesting too few positions. In Cebu, for example, three members of Lakas are fighting for the governorship. The Nationalist People's Coalition, on the other hand, is quietly, and efficiently, building itself up as a party to reckon with by building a strong provincial base. These trends are being ignored by the public at large, and even many political observers. But the results of the elections for these two groups, and the other parties, will determine which becomes the party to reckon with after May.

Too many

FROM 53 in 1953, the number of provinces has expanded to 79. Growth in population is the ostensible reason for the increase, but over the same period, Indonesia and India have retained the same provincial divisions with virtually little change. The increase in provinces—and corresponding local government positions—cannot be attributed to economic needs, but rather, to what the Americans call gerrymandering.

Gerrymandering is a tactic used by legislators to redraw the boundaries of their districts in order to maintain themselves in power. Over the past half century, dynasties and warlords have used Congress and the law to create provinces where they can further entrench themselves and their families in power. The result is more gravy for our political class: more positions, after all, equals greater patronage. Greater patronage means increased corruption.

The proliferation of local government positions points to a grave weakness of our current political system, and this weakness must be addressed when considering potential constitutional changes. We must ask ourselves if we really need so many provinces, and so many officials, so many people to vote for, and thus, so many people willing to do everything, to court those votes. Is the measure of democracy the number of positions, with accompanying salaries, allowances and perks? Must progress be measured by the continued division of our national territory into tinier and tinier fiefdoms?



Comelec should cease being a wimp

AMONG ALL the lawsuits filed against President Macapagal-Arroyo, I think the most meritorious and easiest to prove is the one on GMA's illegal posters and billboards filed by former Land Transportation Office chief Mariano Santiago. All the prosecution has to do is show photographs of the oversized billboards and the posters illegally placed outside designated poster areas. And if the Commission on Elections acts on them promptly and courageously, it may discourage local candidates from violating the rules on posters.

The campaign period for local candidates has started and we can expect the whole Philippines to blossom with millions of illegal posters, streamers and billboards, unless the Comelec puts the fear of disqualification in the hearts of candidates.

The Comelec should stop being a wimp and disqualify a few candidates flagrantly violating election laws to set an example for the others. Why issue rules at all if the government is not going to enforce them?

After the initial campaign against illegal posters and billboards for the benefit of media, and spending a lot of money for Metro aides to remove them, the illegal posters have returned on walls, posts and trees. These posters are only for national candidates. Wait until the local candidates start posting theirs.

I am so disappointed at the party-list Bayan Muna, which is my favorite. I expected better behavior from it. Commonwealth Avenue beside the University of the Philippines campus is again full of its posters, after the area was painstakingly cleaned of the posters it had put earlier. Yesterday, workers were again removing its posters. The law says the cost of removing them should be charged to the candidate or the party. Is the Comelec or Metro Manila Development Authority doing this?

The case filed by Santiago is not only because GMA's billboards are oversized and her posters are outside designated areas, but also because taxpayers' money was spent for them. Santiago said funds from the road users' tax

As I See It

Neal H. Cruz

were used for these giant billboards. That is clearly illegal. The law mandates that the road user's tax be used only for road maintenance and traffic signals and signs.

There is even credit-grabbing in these billboards. Even projects initiated by opposition candidates have billboards crediting them to GMA. In the village where I live, a multi-purpose hall was built under the initiative of the homeowners' association with assistance from Rep. Chuck Mathay. No help at all from GMA. But beside the construction site, there appeared a big yellow billboard with the photograph of GMA crediting it to her. A smaller billboard with Mathay's name in very small letters was placed beside it.

When I inquired out of curiosity, I was told that the Department of Public Works and Highways has been ordered to put GMA billboards at all DPWH projects. So you can be sure that there are many other such grabbing of credit for projects of other officials.

The help of the President and the DPWH is urgently needed to finish Congressional Avenue, which will not only ease traffic on Commonwealth but also provide homeowners' access to their homes in subdivisions lining the unfinished road. These homeowners are at the mercy of neighboring subdivisions through which they pass to go home. They are charged onerous fees for stickers that allow them to pass through.

It is only through the efforts of the federation of homeowners' associations that work was done on the street after many years of having been forgotten by the DPWH, Congress and

Malacañang. (Yet two senators, including GMA running mate Noli de Castro, and at least four congressmen live in one of the subdivisions along Congressional.) But work was stopped because of lack of funds. Yet there is plenty of funds for campaign billboards, streamers and posters. So this 1-km stretch has two lanes completed in the middle but unfinished on both ends. The street cannot be used because you cannot enter it from either end. No help from the President here. We will gladly put her billboards all along the road if only she would release the funds to complete it.

Speaking of Sen. Noli de Castro, her vice-presidential rival, Sen. Loren Legarda, seems to have beaten him to the draw in commenting on the controversial "bailout" of the Lopezes' financially troubled Maynilad water firm. Legarda, who used to be a news reader of the Lopez-owned ABS-CBN, denounced the P8-billion government bailout of Maynilad as a "midnight deal that stinks to high heavens." It is an "unforgivable betrayal of the public trust," she said.

Her outburst is big news because the Lopezes used to be her employers at ABS-CBN. And also because her fellow ABS-CBN talent, Noli, is deafeningly silent.

Both Loren and Noli are prized talents of the powerful television network, where they both gained national prominence through their broadcasts over its nationwide facilities. It is assumed that both have a sense of gratitude to the Lopezes for giving them the opportunity to gain popularity through ABS-CBN. What's more, since both are running for vice president this May, they need the support of the network.

But while Loren has cast aside personal considerations to side with the people on a public issue, Noli has been conspicuously silent. Yet both are public officials elected by the people to the Senate to represent, protect and promote the public interest. They both took a solemn oath to serve the people.

Stop her

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

since rules are to Comelec as garlic is to a vampire. Of basic decency, or fair play. The ad opens with GMA being shown with knitted brows, the picture of compassionate fortitude, flying to the aid of all sorts of disaster victims: floods, fire, you name it. The point is clear: It is not government as a corporate entity but GMA as an individual person who is rescuing embattled citizens from their plight. It ends with De Leon saying in a voice that gets more and more unctuous each time I see and hear the ad (and it is inescapable) that cooperation and perseverance are what we need to bring about GMA's vision of a strong republic. Again GMA in various poses.

I challenge any expert in content analysis to come out in the open and say this is not a campaign ad.

As it is, the economic impact of this election spending may be the least of our problems. Though it is a monstrous problem enough in itself. Whoever wins the elections will have to deal with empty coffers and runaway inflation afterward. Like I said, one is tempted to hope that it is GMA herself so she can reap the fruits of her profligacy. But that is like throwing a turtle into the sea to drown as punishment.

The most is the iniquity it represents. I've always maintained that the source of corruption in this country is its lack of any real detestation of it. Which comes in turn from our lack of a concept of taxpayers' money, of a fierce sense of what we pay in taxes being our money, not our mayor's, or governor's, or president's. All those signs that say a road or a bridge or a waiting shed is a project of this and that mayor or governor or president have no business being there. If they are not illegal, they are at

least patently immoral. All the sign that is needed is: "This is where your taxes go." It makes it plain that that road or bridge or waiting shed does not exist out of the goodness of your mayor's or governor's or president's heart but out of the fruits of your labor. You are naturally, legally and rightfully entitled to them.

Those signs abet corruption as surely as oppression abets rebellion. As do the ads being beamed repeatedly by the PCSO. At the very least their content says so. It says GMA is the savior of disaster victims, it says GMA is the fountainhead of benevolence. There is no place for that message in an electoral campaign or out of it. The money De Leon is handling and GMA is using is ours, it is not De Leon's or GMA's. It is our taxes, it is our sweat. Disaster victims are entitled to them as surely as human beings are entitled to the air they breathe.

But more than they abet corruption, they are corruption, and epically so. What are those ads saying but that government funds do not belong to us, the taxpayer, but to GMA, the usurper, they are her private domain and she may do with them as she pleases? I must protest again this attitude of being resigned to the President doing anything she wants, which I constantly hear in presumably objective analyses of the situation. She is the incumbent, the wags say knowingly, she has a good chance to win because she can use all the power and money at her disposal to compel the voters to vote wrong and the Comelec to count wrong.

Why on earth must we allow it? Why on earth must we accept this as a given as though there was nothing we can do about it? Why on earth must we factor it into the equation as though it were the most natural thing in the world? Why on earth must we think ourselves sophisticated and worldly wise and people who know the world "like it is" not to be furious about something like this? GMA is using up all our money to buy votes? There is only one thing to do:

Stop her.
Right here, right now.

Lopez family will emerge a winner

DESPITE their financial difficulties, the Lopez family has again moved into the center of political controversy in the midst of a national election. The Lopez Group of Companies has come under fire over the compromise settlement with the government of the P19 billion debts of Maynilad Water Services and the refund by Meralco of electricity charges after it had prematurely implemented an order of the Energy Regulatory Commission allowing the company to provisionally increase power rates effective January 2004.

Under the compromise settlement, the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System effectively released Benpres, the Lopez holding company, from its commitment to guarantee at least \$47 million in Maynilad debts in case of default. The settlement has been criticized as a "sweatheart" deal between the administration and the Lopezes, a trade off for political support of the Lopezes for President Macapagal-Arroyo in the elections. It has also been described as a government "bailout" of the debt-strapped Benpres and comes as a relief to lighten Maynilad's debt burden.

The settlement has generated political repercussions for President Macapagal, against whom graft charges have been filed with the Office of the Ombudsman by a senatorial candidate of presidential contender Raul Roco, alleging the deal gave Maynilad "unwarranted benefits." The controversy has converted Maynilad into a political football.

Whether or not the settlement is a "bailout" or handed huge benefits to Maynilad has to be demonstrated. The President is digging her heels on the agreement. She is determined to go ahead with the government takeover of Maynilad. Whether or not the takeover will "ensure that the people have clean water at reasonable cost," as claimed by the President, also remains to be validated.

It is unrealistic to expect that these issues will be calmly resolved in the heated atmosphere of the election campaign. Clearly, water and electricity rates have become politicized, and it is possible

ANALYSIS

Amando Doronila



to determine whether the people gained or lost from these transactions. It is also a matter of conjecture as to whether Roco's campaign has gained from its taking the water deal to court and as to whether the President can convince the public that the takeover will benefit the public interest.

The controversy over the water firm's takeover calls attention to the political resilience of the Lopez family whether in bad or good times. If the President has indeed concluded a "pact with the devil" over water, that demonstrates that the Lopez family, despite its financial difficulties, still exercises a political clout that cannot be ignored.

This is not the first time that the family has been embroiled in political controversy, ever since it started to build an economic empire after the war. No Filipino political family has ever been more central in political controversies than the Lopezes, confirming their dominant role in the political-economic oligarchy, some of whose members have challenged, without success, this dominance.

Just more than a year ago, the President mounted a bid to seize control of Meralco's management from the Lopez family. The family successfully blunted the attempt as determinedly as it defeated the effort by the President's father, President Diosdado Macapagal, a genuinely populist president, to destroy the Lopezes' economic and political power, already centered then on Meralco. President Ferdinand Marcos, who had a falling out with the Lopezes in 1971, used his martial law powers to crush the Lopez economic power, at a time when they had lost political pow-

er (which cannot be exercised under a martial law regime), and went to the extent of confiscating family assets and imprisoning Geny Lopez, the crown prince of the Lopez empire.

Like a sphinx dusting off ashes of ruin, the Lopez family rebuilt their assets. The rehabilitation of their economic empire took place in the milieu of politics in which it had to negotiate with presidents from Aquino, Ramos, Estrada and the second Macapagal, rather than dictate the terms, as the Lopez patriarch Eugenio Lopez Sr. was wont to do.

Although bad business judgments as well as bad economic times have depreciated the Lopez assets, their entrenchment in two key sectors—the utilities (water and electricity) and media (through ABS-CBN)—places them in strategic positions from where they can exercise political power and gives them the leverage to cut political deals. Indications are clear that ABS-CBN, a profit maker in its own right, played a central role in the shifting alliance of the Lopezes, this time with President Macapagal, who is in dire need of allies in the business community.

The card was Sen. Noli de Castro, whose popularity was the main reason why the President took him as her vice-presidential teammate. In the opinion polls, De Castro is far ahead of his rival, Sen. Loren Legarda. The selection of De Castro is one of the shrewdest decisions made by the President in the campaign, and a politically correct one, at that. It has coopted the vote-drawing power of De Castro to counter that of Fernando Poe Jr. The deal has denied ABS-CBN to the opposition.

Whatever is the trade-off, we will not know until after the elections. If the President has demonstrated her Machiavellian instincts in accommodating the Lopezes, the family patriarch, the quiet and self-effacing Oscar Lopez, has proved to be as Machiavellian and pragmatic. From the debris of this campaign, whoever wins, I am certain of one outcome: the Lopez family will not only survive but come out on top, with its fortunes rebuilt.

Essence of democracy

DONG Puno sounded pissed.

Giving his welcome message before the start of the televised portion of "Tapatan sa Halalan," Puno noted that the appearance of just two of the five presidential candidates at the first of the televised debates "validates the public's fears" about how the aspirants for the highest office of the land regard voters and their duties to the electorate. He thanked Raul Roco and Bro. Eddie Villanueva "on behalf of the network and the people" for honoring their commitment to participate in the "Tapatan," and added that in deciding not to take part in this forum on "population, poverty and human development" for "political" reasons, the other candidates and their handlers "defy and frustrate the nature of democratic election and the essence of democracy."

The point of such public exercises as the "Tapatan," Puno added, was precisely "to test (one's) ideas in a public forum and before the other candidates ... on such an important issue." This is why, he said, "no matter what happens we will push through with these debates, and find time, and the number of candidates (who show up) doesn't matter." An election, he pointed out, was "not a beauty contest" and the essence of democratic elections was "the testing of ideas in the light of competing ideas (of the other) candidates."

This view was supported by Sen. Rodolfo Biazon. Citing statistics to illustrate the gravity of the population problem, Biazon asserted that "the people have the right to know what officials have to offer on these issues."

Explaining the concept behind "Tapatan," Ana Maria Tabunda of Pulse Asia, one of the sponsors of the event, said that aside from giving voters an idea of where the candidates stood on these issues, the organizers wanted to bring the issues (of population, poverty and human development) to the attention of the presidential candidates. But how could voters make an intelligent choice, she wondered, when "some candidates refused to deal with these issues (and tell us about their) programs?"

THOUGH only two candidates took time to ex-

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David



plain their positions, I believe the public was still able to glean important insights from their appearance.

Villanueva says that in light of the current "social crisis" the country faces, "government has to be serious on family management," the last is his preferred term to population management or family planning. The Jesus Is Lord leader recounted how, in his visit to urban poor areas, he saw "de facto factories of babies" and was convinced that it is "the absolute responsibility" of government to do something for these babies, but without "destroying or damaging life."

As far as he saw it, said Roco, "there is no debate on population." The Constitution, he said, is clear on the right of every couple to follow their conscience in deciding on the size of their family and that government should help them "as long as there is no coercion," only the provision of "information and access" to couples who need these.

Taking a swipe at the "stop at two" position articulated by (absent) candidate Ping Lacson, Roco wanted to know: "What of the third child? Should we punish the third child? And what if a man may have three children with his wife, but six children with other women? Do we punish the third legitimate child but recognize the other children as long as they have different mothers?"

BOTH candidates basically said they support every couple's right to plan their families and that if they won, they would allocate government funds for the provision of contraceptives and services to couples who could not afford them.

Food for Fridays of Lent

MONGO soup with shrimp or *tinapa*, garnished with *malunggay*, is a common Friday meal in most Filipino homes. When you ask Filipinos why this is so, nobody can give a decent answer aside from the fact that it is a tradition they grew up with.

In our home, mongo soup comes with chicken-pork *adobo* as Friday dinner combination and my chef of a sister has gone three steps further by serving *lechon kawali* on a small rice pool filled with mongo soup. Since we are not very devout Catholics (something my dear aunts in Pampanga try to remedy through their prayers), Friday night dinners during Lent become a venue for discussions on the lack of meat during the Fridays of Lent. One has to explain the difference between fasting (restricting food intake to one full meal and light merienda for the day) and abstinence (abstaining from all flesh: pork, beef, chicken and other types of meat and fowl).

It is a delight to watch my 17-year-old niece abstaining from meat on Fridays, while clutching a fast-food delivery flyer she will call at midnight. Her father has no qualms about breaking abstinence, so we often remind him that his hearty gulp of Friday *adobo* would lead to his burning in hell for eternity.

When one thinks of all the serious crimes that are committed in our country every day, one wonders whether we should just junk fasting and abstinence altogether.

People fast for vanity diets these days and many people are forced to fast because there is no food on the table, so why does it seem so difficult to give up meat on the Fridays of Lent and to fast two days during this period? The world has become so secular that many of us hardly feel the 40 days of Lent (what in Latin was known as *quadragesima* or in the Philippines as *kwaresma*), beginning with Ash Wednesday and ending with Easter Sunday.

In many Catholic countries, abstinence from meat is a rule on all Fridays of the year, but Spain wa-

LOOKING BACK

Ambeth R. Ocampo



on abstinence on all Fridays of the year except Lent. Naturally, this privilege was transferred to the Philippines when it was a Spanish colony, so while other places would just have mongo soup (or its equivalent) on Fridays, we can have *adobo* or some other meat dish as well. Thus during Lent, we suffer withdrawal symptoms. Nobody notices how history has actually shaped the way we eat, what we eat and what we don't eat.

For many Filipinos, abstinence doesn't mean abstaining from meat; it means eating seafood. Fish, shellfish, shrimp are allowed. Eggs as future fowl is a complicated case, although I am told that the Catholic bishops of the Philippines rendered a decision on *balut* saying that this aborted duckling is not considered meat and can be taken on days of abstinence.

In the carnivorous West, abstaining from meat and fowl was considered a sacrifice or a way of practicing penance and poverty, but when the dietary restrictions were translated to the Philippines, it did not take into account the fact that since they lived in an archipelagic country, Filipinos actually ate more fish than meat. These days when fish can sometimes be more expensive than pork, people start to look for the penance and poverty in a seafood diet.

Having to face another meatless Friday, I remembered a few paragraphs from Chapter 23 of "Noli Me Tangere," which mentions different kinds of fish. The characters are having a picnic on the lake and all the food was from the lake.

Fish taken live from the lake

pen (that later contained a crocodile) was immediately dropped into a boiling *sinigang* broth. Animal rights activists may complain about this, but then this was how good food was prepared in the late 19th-century Philippines.

Rizal draws short portraits of Andeng and Tia Isabel in these lines that make my mouth water (from the translation by Soledad Lacson-Locsin): "Andeng, Maria Clara's foster sister, had the reputation of being an excellent cook despite her clean and joyous mien. She prepared the rice water for stewing the fish, adding to it tomatoes and *kamias*, helped—or hindered—in this by some vining for her favor. The girls cleaned the squash vine tendrils, the snow peas, and cut the *paayap* into short pieces the length of cigarettes..."

"Tia Isabel was in command: The *ayungin* be good for *sinigang*, leave the *bia* for the *escabeche*, the *dalag* and the *buan-buan* for *pasa*; the *dalag* lives long. Put them in the net so that they remain in the water. The lobsters to the frying pan! The *banak* is good for broiling wrapped in banana leaves and stuffed with tomatoes. Leave the rest to serve as decoys: it is not good to empty the trap completely..."

All these types of fish are lost to me now. All I know is *bangus* and *galunggong*. My mother remembered all these fish from her childhood when the Pasig River was clean and fish actually thrived in its waters. At times she would get these fish from the market and serve them in a variety of ways. Now all I know is what is in Lacson-Locsin's notes: *ayungin* is silver perch (*Datnina plumbea*), *bia* is flathead goby (*Gobius juris*), *buan-buan* is tarpon (*Megalops cyprinoids*), *banak* is mullet (Family Mugilidae) and *dalag* is fresh-water mudfish, murrel (*Ophicephalus striatus*).

Looking at food and fish shows us not only how we eat but how much we have changed since Rizal's time.

Comments are welcome at aoampopo@att.net

National karma

THE OFFICIAL campaign period for the local elections in May only began yesterday but I sense that there's already growing national pessimism (if not depression) over what seems to be a lack of choices.

I've tried to look for ways to overcome my own pessimism and had some reason to be optimistic after attending a press conference last Monday, when something called "common karma" was brought up.

Let me explain first that the press conference was organized by the Fo Guang Buddhist Association, a Chan Buddhist sect (similar to Zen) which has temples worldwide, including Manila, Cebu and Bacolod. The press conference was organized so Chinese-Filipino mass media people could meet the Venerable Master Hsin Ting, who is Fo Guang's Head Abbot and a leading Buddhist scholar.

It was a small press conference, more like an informal *merienda* *cena*. Among the media people, there were two of us from the English dailies: columnist Wilson Lee Flores of the Philippine Star and myself.

Wilson, the quintessential political columnist, asked the abbot to give his views on the just concluded, but still heavily contested, presidential elections in Taiwan.

Buddhist monks usually avoid politics and the abbot was obviously taking that line, but he also gave an intriguing exposition about how a Buddhist view might be used to transcend politics.

The future of a country, he explained, does not solely depend on who comes out as president in an election; instead, it is "common karma" that determines where we are today, and where we will head for in the future.

I think it'll be useful to explain this karma first, especially since our Filipino concept of karma is very negative. Thus, when we say, "*Kinakarma ka*" (literally, you are being "karma-ed"), it is a way of explaining misfortune, with the idea that you brought it upon yourself from past misdeeds, often similar to your present misfortune. For example, a woman walks out on her boyfriend and people will say to the man: "Ah, that's your karma because you've walked out on so many women."

The Filipino version of karma only takes part of the original concepts as developed in Hinduism and Buddhism. In a nutshell, karma is nothing more than a cause-and-effect relationship, often explained metaphorically as reaping what we sow. It's hard to put labels here of "good" and "bad" or "good deeds" and "misdeeds" since Buddhism, at least in its more orthodox form, does not conceptualize supernatural beings rewarding or punishing people. Instead, Buddhism comes closer to Western humanism in emphasizing human responsibility for all that happens.

Moreover, Buddhism recognizes this cause-and-effect relationship not only in terms of our actions as individuals, but also as groups—and even as nations. Thus, when I asked the abbot about Iraq, he answered that "force only brings more force, hatred more hatred." He, of course, did not refer to any particular country, but one can guess how the warmongering policies of some governments affect what we might call a global karma and that, sadly, we will have to live with more terrorism in the future because of that karma.

To link all this then to elections, one can even argue that karma "determines" the results of our elections, not in a metaphysical way but in a very practical cause-and-effect relationship.

We keep complaining about how voters are so easily manipulated by celebrities, or by vigilante types, or even by candidates bandying their doctorates, but forget that a voter's political consciousness is molded, through the years, through what we see in our families, communities and the nation—in other words, what we ourselves have done, or not done, over the years. In other words, someone is elected president because it is our common karma.

Instead of just complaining then, we have to ask ourselves why we've gotten to where we are, from our low priority given to educational establishments to the political system we've created, with its emphasis on make-believe and glib gab (in Filipino: *bola*). And if we lack good women and men running for office, we have to think of how we've so thoroughly corrupted the system that honest people won't even dare to run for office, knowing that the electoral process is itself already so tainted.

Listening to the talk about common or collective karma, I couldn't help but think of a similar concept in Catholicism: that of social sin. A Catholic Church document, "Reconciliation et Paenitentia" defines social sin as "...certain situations or the collective behavior of certain social groups, big or small, or even of whole nations and blocs of nations."

That document goes on to explain that social sins result from individual acts "of those who cause or support evil or who exploit it; of those who are in a position to avoid, eliminate, or at least limit certain social evils but who fail to do so out of laziness, fear, or the conspiracy of silence, through secret complicity or indifference; of those who take refuge in the supposed impossibility of changing the world, and also of those who sidestep the effort and sacrifice required; producing specious reasons of a higher order."

There is much in common between the concepts of social sin and common karma but the latter goes beyond "sin" to emphasize what can be done to generate something more positive. A belief in common karma does not mean becoming fatalistic. The abbot kept emphasizing that people can change both individual and common karma.

That made me think about what we need to do in the context of our own elections. I still feel that our choices for president are terribly limited, and that we need to gird ourselves for rougher times ahead. Yet, precisely because our common karma has so limited our options, we need to think of how we can help people to survive the rough times ahead, and, even more importantly, how we might want to transform our politics, helping people to become more discerning, to see through the glamour and glitter and search instead for the candidates' *nei xin* (Chinese words that mean an inner heart, similar to our *loob*).

How do we come to discern other people's *loob*? I would think that won't happen unless our own inner hearts are at peace, looking for the good in people even as we confront the all too real structural evils that plague us. The Lenten season is a good time for us to think of social sin, and how we might break out of the national karma we've brought upon ourselves.

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The problem is in medium of teaching

THIS is in reaction to historian Ambeth Ocampo's recent columns on the memorandum of Education Secretary Edilberto de Jesus. (PDI, 2/27/04 and 3/3/04) With regard to the deterioration of Philippine education due to the decline of English as an understood language of instruction for the three R's, on the part of our schoolchildren, our suggestion is:

(1) Teach the three R's (reading, writing, 'rithmetic) to our children in Filipino and in their respective native languages. The return of the *cartilla* or *caton* system with a 32-letter Balagtas alphabet, with its letters read and syllabicated mostly in Spanish (and not in English as is the prac-

tice today) will be a better tool to teach our children the mentioned three R's.

(2) Filipino must be the main medium of instruction in the elementary and secondary levels with English as an optional language subject. General knowledge will better be absorbed by our children in a language that they understand best because it is already their language.

(3) The teaching of English as an optional language subject in the secondary and tertiary levels must be subsidized by the Summer Institute of Linguistics or the USAID or, simply, the US government. Filipinos with a higher IQ and who are literate first in their own national language

will better acquire English.

(4) It is a waste to teach English to students with a low IQ which is the case of over 90 percent of our students.

(5) It is unfair to force all students to master English when upon graduation, the vast majority of them become jobless and are resigned to return to their native communities, particularly the provincial town communities, where English is not the daily language.

(6) Eighty percent or more of children enrolled in Grade 1 do not reach Grade 4 and more than 50 percent of those who finish high school do not finish a college degree.

(7) With Filipino as the medium of instruction the passing grade of 70 percent will be fair. But so long as English is the primary medium of instruction, not even a passing grade of 50 percent will be fair.

I have been a high school teacher and later a college professor for over 40 years. The above conclusions are based on my own close observations in the education and culture of my countrymen.

—GUILLERMO GÓMEZ RIVERA,
ggrhisfil@yahoo.com

Misrepresenting the Iglesia Filipina Independiente

THIS is with reference to the inside picture story of President Macapagal-Arroyo receiving a blessing from a certain Bishop Aguisando and other officials of the Iglesia Filipina Independiente. (PDI, 3/16/04)

The hierarchy of the Iglesia Filipina Independiente with central office address at

1500 Taft Avenue, Ermita, Manila strongly disowns such an act of misrepresentation. It is a blatant misuse and abuse of the registered name of our Church as stipulated in its Articles of Incorporation. The bishop and other officials who performed the blessing are not included in the roster

of clergy of the Iglesia Filipina Independiente.

The Iglesia Filipina Independiente has not had any experience of publicly endorsing any candidate during elections in spite of the fact that there were and are priests and bishops who decided to run for elective

positions in elections. Every member of this church is free to vote for candidates of his choice or as his conscience dictates.

—BISHOP BART O. ESPARTERO, dean,
FR. ZALDY M. FABABAEER, canon,
Iglesia Filipina Independiente,
1500 Taft Ave., Manila

Inefficient mail delivery service

I WANT to bring to the attention of postal authorities the inefficiency of the San Mateo Post Office.

Years back, mail received at the post office was delivered three days after, including locally posted mail. Matters seem to have deteriorated due to rampant delays in mail delivery. I sent letters to the Office of the Postmaster General in the hope that this could be looked into, but no action seems to have been taken.

Last March 3, I received a letter posted at the Catanduanes State College Post Office, Virac, Catanduanes, on Feb. 6. The letter was received at the San Mateo Post Office on Feb. 11.

I could hardly fathom why the letter was delivered after 15 working days considering the fact that our residence is just 150 meters from the post office. Is there any way of improving the postal service in San Mateo?

—PROJECTO T. TOMAGAN,
19-A B. Mariano St.,
Sta. Ana, San Mateo, Rizal

Tesda's remedial measures on ARBs

THIS is in response to the paid advertisement titled, "The Backsliding of Tesda on ARBs" by the Confederated Associations of Licensed Entertainment Agencies (Calea) and its allied and/or member organizations last March 15. Let me clarify the following concerns:

1. Inefficient and defective certification system for overseas performing artists (OPAs)

The backlog on artist record books (ARBs) from the previous administration was already resolved on Jan. 18, 2004. All the ARBs unclaimed on that date were declared null and void after the publication of ARB numbers.

The ARB unit in the National Capital Region of the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority prepared 24,185 ARBs from May 2003 to January 2004. Of this number, only 80 percent was claimed.

2. Resurgence of ARB irregularities
The application for renewal resulting in the issuance of ARBs on Oct. 24, 2003 and other alleged irregularities duly reported have been investigated. The investigation committee reports are being reviewed by the legal service of the Department of Labor and Employment, which recently assigned a hearing officer. Hearings will be conducted so that all the concerned parties can air their sides with the assistance of counsel.

Security of the operating units conducting testing and processing ARBs have been tightened.

3. Regionalization of OPA assessment
Tesda is replicating the successful assessment and certification model for the Maritime Industry to the testing and certification of OPAs.

The volume of new applicants for ARB averages 350 applications per day. The lean manning of regional offices constrains us to allow selected staff of other regional offices to jointly respond to this big volume, as was done in the maritime industry.

Records show that Regions 4-A, 3 and 7 have a sufficient number of registered courses for singers and dancers. There are also applicants for testing venues and testing officers for accreditation by Tesda in these regions.

4. Renewal of ARBs issued by the Philippine Overseas Employment Agency

Of those applying for renewal, the greater majority are not on the database of the POEA, which was officially turned over to Tesda in 2001. Hence, we had to search for appropriate supporting documents before renewal could be effected.

Today, all applications for renewal filed with Tesda in January and February have been prepared and are now ready for release to talents.

—ALCESTIS M. GUIANG,
director general,
Technical Education
and Skills Development Authority,
East Service Road, South Luzon Expressway,
Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila

Hassles for new car owners

GOVERNMENT officials are implementing rules that mean more suffering for some people.

Last Feb. 18, I bought a new car from Honda Shaw Boulevard. Up to now, after almost four weeks, the Land Transportation Office has not released the car's plates.

Then came the guidelines of the police to keep new cars off the road unless they have conduction stickers which must be renewed by paying P282 every week.

The waste of time, effort and money occur in the following:

1. Following up the release of the plates every other day.
2. Paying P282 for the conduction sticker receipt every week.

3. The hassle in stopping and showing the conduction sticker receipt to the police almost every day.

Why do I and many busy people like me have to suffer these unsynchronized government regulations? Are they making guidelines hard for us so that we are forced to come across?

I respectfully suggest that those LTO officials who did not have the foresight to stock up on necessary plates or prevent the police from stopping new cars with no conduction stickers be replaced.

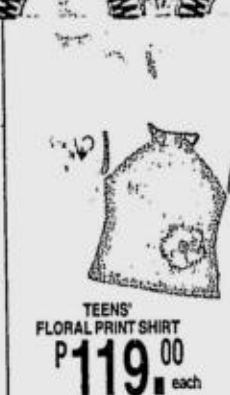
This is a case of inefficiency of government and waste of valuable time, effort and money of many people.

—ERNESTO Z. MEDINA,
4 Arayat St., Mandaluyong City

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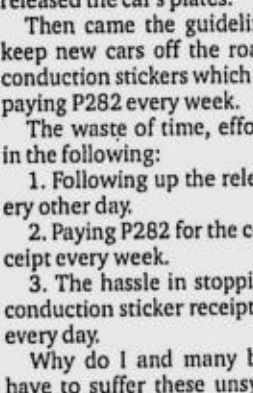
CDO NATA DE COCO 340 GM
P27.25



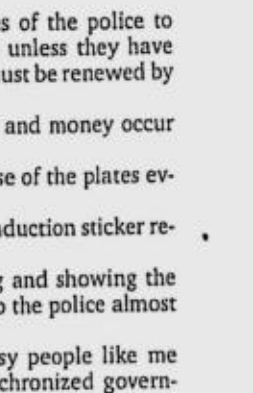
CDO KAONG 340 GM
P35.25



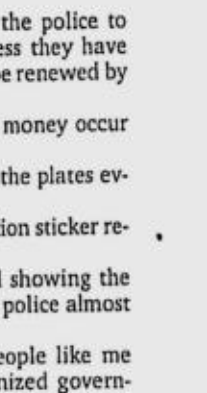
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Across the NATION

Assistant Editor Tony Bergonia

66 Palawan villages get gas revenues

PUERTO PRINCESA CITY—Hours before the campaign period for local positions started and barely two days before the ban on government fund disbursements took place, Energy Secretary Vince Perez made a last minute awarding of P100,000 each for the 66 barangays in this city Wednesday.

The money is part of the P300-million financial assistance promised by President Macapagal-Arroyo when she visited Palawan last March 5.

According to the President, it is

just an advance payment of the national government to Palawan in the share of the province from the Camago-Malampaya Natural Gas to Power Project.

Last March 3, Ms Macapagal signed Executive Order No. 254-A authorizing the further release of funds from the net government

share from the gas project.

The amount has been allocated to several projects. Aside from the assistance of P100,000 to all 431 barangays of Palawan, each of the 23 municipalities will receive P3 million.

Perez also distributed P5 million for the livelihood program of mar-

ket vendors and P20 million for the purchase of land for relocation of the landless of Puerto Princesa City.

The remaining amount is distributed among the following projects: El Nido Airport, P40 million; Southern Palawan Road, P30 million; scholarship program, P15 million; provincial hospital, P10

million; barangay electrification project, P15 million; barangay convergence center in Puerto Princesa, P11.9 million; P10 million for the construction of municipal buildings in Agutaya and P6 million in Cagayancillo; and Palawan State University, P5 million. *Jofelle Tesorio, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

Family planning woes noted in Cordillera

By Desiree Caluza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

BAGUIO CITY—Many women in the Cordillera believe that they need family planning, but this "practical belief" does not match the women's position on the use of contraceptives, a study by the Cordillera Women's Education and Resource Center showed.

"The general state of reproductive health among women ranges from fair to poor," said Jill Cariño, CWERC executive director.

She said the CWERC interviewed

237 women in seven villages in the mining and farming communities in Benguet and Baguio City, to find out how women think about their health, sexuality and rights. The study also looked at the health services available to women.

Cariño said most of the women they interviewed had a low level of awareness on reproductive health. She said their families' low income had prevented them from spending for contraceptives.

She said 39 percent of the women believed that using contraceptives is a sin, while 29 per-

cent were not sure what to believe in or were "confused."

She said the women did not know whether to follow the values taught by their religion or their personal belief that it was necessary to limit the number of their children.

"The use of contraceptives seems to be hindered by practical obstacles, more than moral obstacles. Among these are side effects of contraceptives, lack of knowledge, misconceptions about certain methods, expenses involved and the lack of cooperation of the husband," the study said.

But the study also said many women in Baguio City felt that agencies pushing family planning programs should do more to encourage men to use condoms or undergo vasectomy.

The study also asked the women on their views on abortion.

"Although women's moral values tell that abortion is a sin, in practical situations, abortion on medical grounds finds wide agreement," the study said.

Cariño said cases of induced abortion in the country total 400,000 yearly or one in six pregnancies.

GMA names 16 new Shariah Court judges

COTABATO CITY—President Macapagal-Arroyo has named 16 new Shariah Court judges to serve in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) and other areas in Mindanao.

Among those she named topped the first Shariah bar examination. The 16 judges were chosen out of the 300-strong pool of Shariah counselors-at-law in Mindanao.

Three of the 16 judges hail from Datu Piang, Maguindanao, according to a statement issued by ARMM's Bureau of Public In-

formation. They are Shariah Court Judges Montano Kalimpo, Abdilah Nul and Zailon Wahab.

Last year, during President Macapagal's visit to Cotabato City and ARMM, she promised to fill the vacant slots with the best Muslim judges. She formed a search committee, composed of former Justice Secretary Simeon Datumanong, ARMM Gov. Parouk Hussin, ARMM Vice Gov. Mahid Mutilan and Maguindanao Assemblyman Tommy Ala.

In a statement, President Macapagal said, "the political and securi-

ty aspects that form the most difficult parts of the expectations of the Tripoli Agreement would be fully considered as fully implemented."

To show that Maguindanaoans are proud with the appointment of three judges to the Sharia Court that implements Islamic laws, they hang streamers welcoming the appointments. Judge Kalimpo has been a consistent honor law student and topped the first Shariah special bar examinations and served as a judge of the Shariff Aguak Shariah Court in Maguindanao. He finished

Bachelor of Laws at the Notre Dame University here.

Another native of Datu Piang is Judge Nul who would serve his hometown as Shariah Court judge. He was a former chief of the then Bureau of Agricultural Extension, now the Agricultural Training Institute of the Department of Agriculture and Fisheries.

Judge Wahab once served as head of the cash division of the Office of Muslim Affairs in Manila. *Edwin Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

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Bongbong rival for gov quits race

LAOAG CITY—Outgoing Mayor Roger Fariñas has backed out from the gubernatorial race and blamed the Marcoses for his failure to obtain a party nomination from Nationalist People's Coalition founding chair Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco Jr.

Fariñas, who belongs to the NPC, would have filed his candidacy on Wednesday to run against Ilocos Norte Gov. Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. The mayor announced his withdrawal from the race during a press conference on Tuesday night.

Fariñas said the rival camp resorted to political maneuverings so that Marcos would run unopposed. He identified the governor's brother-in-law, businessman Gregorio Araneta III, as the one who allegedly asked Cojuangco, a close friend of the Marcoses, to deny him a party nomination.

But Marcos immediately denied that anyone in his family had asked

Cojuangco to stop Fariñas from running.

Denial

"He can believe what he wants... My mother (former first lady Imelda Marcos) did not call anybody... I did not call anybody. I don't know if Gregory called anybody but he was not acting on our behalf," Marcos said on Wednesday.

"Why is he (Fariñas) attacking my family when it is his party that rejected him? How come it is our fault that his party does not want to endorse him? Why should we be blamed?" he added.

Marcos said he did not want Fariñas to withdraw from the race. He, however, said it was still possible for Fariñas to run once he gets the NPC nomination.

"Nothing says that he cannot get the nomination sometime down the road. It's still possible. This is the second time

that he talked about (running). So why not make it a third time. I'm just being careful that there are no surprises," Marcos said.

No changes

He said Fariñas' withdrawal from the race would not change their campaign since it was designed to boost the chances of his other candidates in the elections.

"We will just continue the things we were doing. The campaign is not designed to be against anybody," Marcos said.

Fariñas claimed that Araneta had asked Cojuangco, through a business associate, to stop Fariñas from running against Marcos.

"They made sure that Bongbong took the easy lane without having to work harder in courting the votes," Fariñas said.

He said his hands were tied despite

his desire to challenge Marcos for the gubernatorial post.

"You know Marcos and Mr. Cojuangco. Cojuangco can't turn down Marcos," Fariñas said.

The mayor said his brother, former Ilocos Norte Gov. Rodolfo Fariñas, had suspected that something would get in the way and cautioned him to delay his announcement to run against Marcos until he got his nomination.

"I want to fight. I'm not saying I will win. But I wanted to give it a try... I will still campaign against Bongbong. Those who expected me to run, I will ask them not to vote for Marcos and other non-performers in government to teach them a lesson," he said.

He said he would actively campaign for President Macapagal-Arroyo in Ilocos Norte. The Marcoses have openly supported Ms Macapagal's leading rival, actor Fernando Poe Jr. *Cristina Arzadon, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Cafgu killed

LEGAZPI CITY—A member of the Civilian Armed Forces Geographical Unit was killed on Thursday night by 10 armed men, believed to be members of the New People's Army, who also allegedly ransacked his house in Sittlo Pag-asa, Barangay Salangon in Minalabac town, Camarines Sur. Lt. Col. Jose Pardo, commanding officer of the Army's 902nd Infantry Brigade identified the victim as Eligio Pamarang Jr., who died after suffering from bullet wounds from an M-16 rifle.

Joyce Mejillano, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Jail guards probed

DUMAGUETE CITY—Two prison guards of the Negros Oriental Detention and Rehabilitation Center (NODRC) are under investigation following the escape of two inmates. Provincial lawyer Erwin Vergara, head of the investigating committee, said they will determine the liabilities of provincial guards Bonapat Torres and Manolito Villanueva for the escape of Jaime Amaro and Neil Cariño who are facing robbery with multiple homicide and robbery charges respectively. The two bolted the NODRC on Feb. 12 by sawing off the rooftop of their cell. *Romy Amador, PDI Visayas Bureau*

45 passengers rescued

CEBU CITY—The Coast Guard rescued 45 passengers of a motorboat that ran aground while sailing to Pasil Port, Cebu City on March 14. Cebu Coast Guard station commander Elson Germogino said motorboat Walwen left Getafe Port in Bohol at 2 p.m. and was expected to arrive in Pasil at 6 p.m. The motorboat developed engine trouble while approaching Lawis ledge. Strong winds and waves carried the motorboat to a shallow area in the waters off Gatas-gatas Islet where it ran aground. Germogino said a passenger called up the Emergency Rescue Unit foundation, which contacted the Coast Guard. *Jhunnex Napallacan, PDI Visayas Bureau*

Emergency landing

CEBU CITY—A Cebu Pacific plane bound for Zamboanga City made an emergency landing on March 16 at the Mactan Cebu International Airport (MCIA) about 15 minutes after takeoff. Angelo Verdan, the airport general manager, said the passengers were later transferred to another plane. Verdan said the pilot of flight 431 decided to go back to the MCIA after noticing that the left engine of the DC 9 plane malfunctioned. Roel Aranzado, the supervisor of the control tower at the MCIA, said the plane took off at 9:12 a.m. About 15 minutes later, the pilot declared an emergency and maneuvered the plane back to the airport. Aranzado said the DC 9 plane landed safely at 9:27 a.m. *Jhunnex Napallacan, PDI Visayas Bureau*

NPA leader nabbed

ZAMBOANGA CITY—Authorities yesterday announced the arrest of an alleged ranking communist leader in Western Mindanao during a raid here on Tuesday. Southern Command chief Lt. Gen. Roy Kyamko identified the suspect as Dino Alag-igan. Kyamko said Alag-igan is Ka Nelson of the armed propaganda unit of the New People's Army Genny Baldo Feliciano Command. He said the suspected rebel was still being interrogated. *Julie Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Budget officer slain

KIDAPAWAN CITY—A lone gunman shot and killed the budget officer of Magpet, North Cotabato, inside the compound of his residence here on Friday evening. Supt. Melchor Loyola, provincial police chief, said Reynaldo Maranon's assailant could be a hired gun because he did not personally know the victim. "The suspect called outside the victim's house and asked the victim himself if he was Maranon... whether he was the man in the picture that the suspect was holding," Loyola said. After affirming his identity, the suspect opened fire. Maranon died of three bullet wounds in the body. Gov. Emmanuel Piñol said the victim had been receiving death threats from still unidentified groups. "My sources said the threats were related to his business dealings and the police are looking at that angle closely," he said. *Jeffrey Tupas, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Bet's driver slain

LINGAYEN, Pangasinan—A driver of a mayoral candidate of San Nicolas town was shot and killed in front of the public market in that town on Saturday. Chief Insp. Rhode Espero, San Nicolas police chief, said Jonjon Sambrano, driver of mayoral candidate Leoncio Saldivar, died instantly after he was shot by Albert Tenoso, 32, a utility worker of the San Nicolas government. Espero said Tenoso is a supporter of former Mayor Conrado Rodrigo, father of incumbent Mayor Christopher Jones Rodrigo. The younger Rodrigo, of the Nationalist People's Coalition, is seeking reelection against Saldivar of the Liberal Party. Espero said former Mayor Rodrigo helped the police in locating and arresting Tenoso. *Yolanda Sotelo-Fuertes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Tanong Ng Bayan

Ngayong Alas-10 Ng Gabi

Maynilad Water: Tayo ba ang nadale?

Ang taong bayan ba ang magbabayad ng mga utang ng pamilyang Lopez? "Yan ang puno't dulo ng isyung 'balout.' Ngayong alas-10 ng gabi, ang sagot ng mga grupong laban sa Maynilad arrangement, at ng MWSS. Sa Lunes, ang sagot ng Maynilad. Dito lang sa InqTV on ABC.



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Baguio starts waste segregation

BAGUIO CITY—The next one to knock on a door in Baguio will be selling garbage, literally.

Women's groups here have volunteered to institutionalize the city's first waste segregation program to help calm down residents of Barangay Irisan, who have petitioned the council to shut down Baguio's only dump.

The women volunteers will go house-to-house to promote household recycling, after noting that the summer capital's daily refuse now peaks at 272 metric tons due to the city's transient population and six shopping malls, including SM City Baguio.

These transients add to the 77 percent of waste generated by Baguio's households. The city market contributes 18 percent of the garbage, while commercial

facilities share 4 percent of the total garbage collected in Baguio.

Vice Mayor Betty Lourdes Tabanda said residents in Barangay Irisan had complained about the foul methane odor from the 2.59-hectare dump in the area.

The city's solid waste management office said the odor comes from underground fires that scavengers apparently ignite daily to enable them to salvage scrap metal buried under the mountain of decaying garbage.

City officials witnessed one such underground fire on Wednesday morning.

Ma. Isabel Ongpin, president of the Jaime V. Ongpin Foundation Inc. (JVOFI), turned over a P3-million composting plant to the local government on Wednesday.

But advocates of solid waste

management programs here admitted that they preferred the de-commissioning of the dump.

The existence of a dump in any community "is a sign of wrong development," said Robert Mina, a representative of the Peace and Equity Foundation, administrator of the P10-billion Peace Bonds.

The Foundation for a Sustainable Society Inc. (PSSI), a donor, reported that each of the city's 252,386 residents contributes between 0.3 kilograms and 0.5 kg of waste each day.

Over 70,000 students reside in Baguio, while 47,325 tourists turn up here during the holidays.

Romeo Concio, manager of the city's general services office, said the plant was designed to process the city market's biodegradable waste.

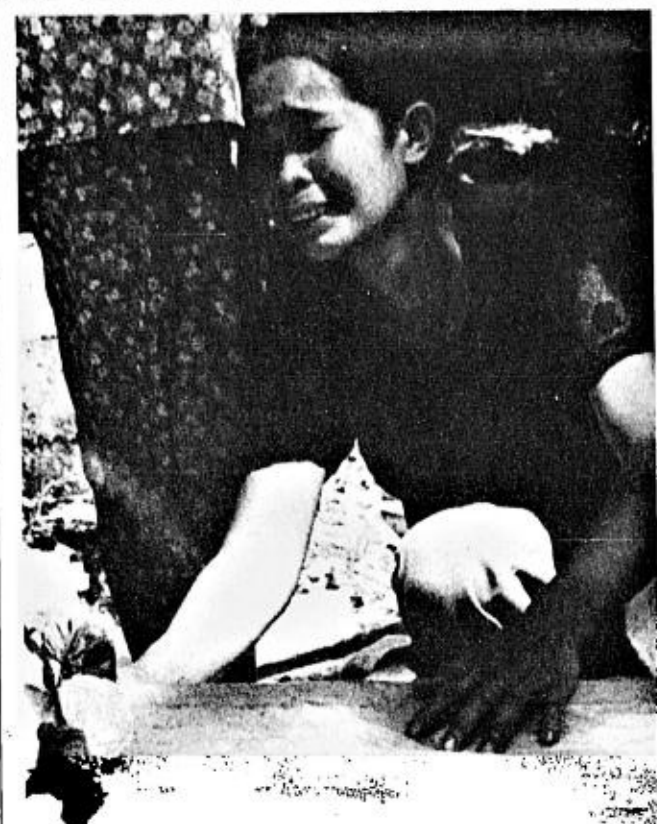
The city government has appro-

riated P8 million to allow the facility to process household wastes.

Mayor Bernardo Vergara said 55 percent of Baguio trash is biodegradable while 35 percent are recyclable.

Recycled compost is now worth P120 a bag, which means that the city could earn P25,234 for 2,520 bags it can generate each month, according to a JVOFI report.

The potential profit in recycling waste is key to the women's groups' new drive, Tabanda said. The women's groups have already promoted their own "recycling" program in a small Baguio barangay, where they buy tin cans, bottles and waste paper from households using seed capital provided by the government, she said. Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau



FALLEN FIGHTER

The wife of slain farmer Felizardo Benitez grieves over his coffin during his burial March 24 in San Narciso, Quezon. Benitez was said to have led other farmers in denouncing the alleged repressive rule of his landlord.

SOPHIE HOFBAUER

DENR to rid trees of campaign ads, charge violators

SORSOGON CITY—Put them in the proper place or get sued.

This was the warning issued by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources in the province to politicians who will use the trees to post their campaign materials.

The DENR through its Employees Union (DENREU), along with the Commission on Elections, the Philippine National Police and the Task Force HOPE (Honest, Orderly and Peaceful Elections) of the National Movement for Free Elections, will rid trees of campaign and propaganda materials.

Lemuel Soriano, DENREU president, said Oplan Woodpecker will be started by 73 of their members and Namfrel volunteers at 1 p.m. today.

Soriano said their group will tear down "all" political materials even those of incumbent officials, including those of President Macapagal-Arroyo, and will file cases against violators and "politicians' men" who will be caught in the act.

"It will be total, there will be no exemption there. Besides, in our previous campaigns no one has complained because it's really unlawful," he said.

He cited Comelec Resolution No. 6616 deputizing the DENR to implement Comelec Resolution 6520 or the Rules and Regulations Implementing Republic Act No. 9006 or the Fair Elections Act.

Those who will be caught may be held for Sec. 11, item no. 6 of the Fair Elections Act which states that "it is unlawful to post, display, or exhibit any election campaign or propaganda material outside of authorized common poster areas, in public places, or in private places without the consent of the owner thereof."

The DENR may also file a separate case for violation of PD 953 which prohibits "any acts causing injury to trees," Soriano said.

Oplan Woodpecker will start in the city limits, from boundaries of Barangay Abuyog near Gubat town to Salvation near Castilla and will eventually spread throughout the province.

Emir Emano Gamis, PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Boracay resort owners urge Coast Guard to remove capsized ship

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

BORACAY ISLAND, Aklan—Fearing environmental hazards, resort owners here have urged the Coast Guard to salvage a cargo ship that capsized near the island about three months ago.

Lara Salaver, president of the Boracay Foundation Inc. (BFI), said they feared that the oil spillage would pollute the waters of the island-resort. The ship also poses risks to divers and windsurfers, said Salaver.

BFI groups around 105 owners of resorts, restaurants and other business firms on the island.

"We cannot understand why the salvaging of the ship has taken so long," Salaver told the INQUIRER.

The LCT Doña Trinidad II capsized at around 12:45 a.m. on Dec. 8. It was on its way to Oriental Mindoro from Cebu with 800 tons of cement when it was battered by strong winds and huge waves.

The Coast Guard rescued all 19 crewmembers. The ship, however, has remained grounded about 250 meters off Sitio Bolabog in Balabon Village. The site is located on the opposite side of the

popular stretch of white beach and is ideal for surfing and diving.

The Coast Guard has sent a demand letter to the ship's owner, the Cebu-based Candano Shipping Lines Inc., to salvage the ship, said Lt. Edgar Ybanez, commander of the Ybague station in Caticlan, Malay town in Aklan.

He said they would conduct salvage operations under the company's expense if the shipwrecking line failed to remove their ship after two weeks.

Ybanez said they have been regularly monitoring the ship for any leakages coming from the ship's oil tanks that contain at least 7,000 liters of diesel fuel.

He assured that there is no immediate danger of spillage unless the oil tanks are pierced.

They could also not determine the effects of the spillage on the seabed until the ship is removed from the site, he added.

Tessie Flores, head of operations of the shipping line, said the salvage operations have been delayed by the processing of the company's insurance claims and determining the costing of the operation.

Fires hit Cavite town, Bacolod City; 11 injured

By Marlon Ramos
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau
and Jhunnex Napallacan
PDI Visayas Bureau

TWO FIRES this week razed a public market in Cavite and the houses of some 1,500 persons in Bacolod City.

Thousands of market stall owners and vendors lost their hard-earned investments after a five-hour fire gutted the public market of Rosario, Cavite and the municipal hall's engineering office early Wednesday morning.

Chief Insp. Joseph Javier, town police chief, said about P12 million worth of properties was razed by the fire that allegedly started from a faulty electrical wiring just after 1 a.m.

He said all of the market's 468 stalls were completely destroyed.

Javier said firefighters were able to seize control of the situation at around 4:45 a.m. and declared "fire out" at past 6 a.m.

Nobody was hurt in the fire, he said.

But in Bacolod City, 11 persons suffered minor burns in a fire that hit a densely populated area in Barangay T. Padilla here shortly before midnight of Monday that left about 1,500 persons homeless.

Initial investigation disclosed that several market vendors in Rosario saw "a glaring light" coming from a store that sold cooking oil. The stall was located in the

middle of the market and spread to every direction, said Javier.

The fire also destroyed important documents of the town's engineering office, located beside the market.

Had the fire continued for a few more minutes, the municipal hall could have also been destroyed, police said.

Vendors and stall owners blamed the firemen for "unnecessary" damage that the fire had caused. They accused the firefighters of responding "very late to our call for help."

But Javier dismissed the accusations. He said fire trucks were already at the scene a few minutes after news about the fire broke out.

Fire victims appealed to candidates and government officials to help them recover their losses.

"Many of us are still indebted to 5-6 lending investors. After what had happened, we don't know how we could possibly pay them back," said one vendor.

The fire in Bacolod City started in the house of Manuel Padilla at about 11:05 p.m. and immediately spread to nearby houses.

Padilla said he, his wife and child were at the nearby house of his mother Alice to watch a pirated version of a movie "Passion of Christ" when the fire broke out.

Fire Investigator PO3 Alilakas Espinola of the Cebu City Fire Department said they were still looking into the cause of the fire, which destroyed about P2.5 million worth of property.

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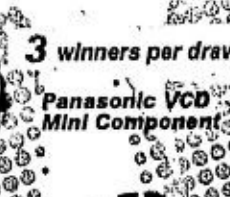
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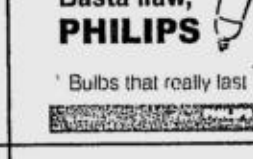
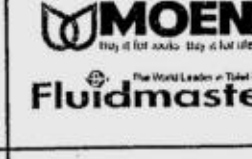
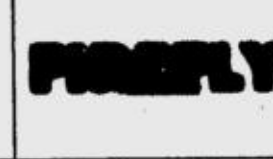
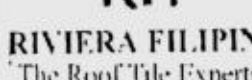
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Deal saves Lopez family P2B

From page A1

year at one percent over prevailing rates.

"If these terms are not acceptable to any or all of the bridge banks, then payments to non-accepting banks shall be held by Maynilad in trust for ... Benpres if any or all non-accepting bridge banks recover from Benpres pursuant to Benpres' guarantee," the term sheet said.

This means that New Maynilad will still be obligated to pay the banks even if they decide to call in the Benpres guarantee.

Benpres was supposed to provide the guarantees for the \$120 million in a performance bond to the government, but in the compromise deal, the Lopez group would be relieved of this obligation. Onco will provide the \$50 million of the performance bond.

In the original concession agreement, the MWSS could tap the whole performance bond if the concessionaire did not meet its obligations like the payment of concession fees. However, the MWSS had waived this right in the new agreement.

"MWSS further agrees that it shall make no further drawings from the \$120-million standby letter of credit after the initial draw down of \$50 million," the new agreement said.

Reasonable price

Albay Rep. Joey Salceda, a former stockbroker and informal adviser to the President, justified this concession given to the Lopez family.

"Without the deal, the government can call in the whole \$120 million but this would have been the subject of a prolonged court case. And (the Lopez family's) Benpres Holdings is cash-strapped and will not be able to pay it," Salceda said.

He said P3.8 billion was a "reasonable price" to get the consent of the Lopez and Onco to withdraw their case for bankruptcy and allow an early rehabilitation of Maynilad into a commercially viable stand-alone going concern.

Options

The Department of Justice has admitted that terminating the contract and drawing fully on the bond were indeed options in the Maynilad case.

But this would have meant a net loss of P6 billion for the government because the \$120 million or P6.6 billion was P1.4 billion short of Maynilad's unpaid concession fees and it would have

to pay up to P5 billion owed by the company to the banks.

Also, the government would have to resume the payment of P2.3 billion annually for MWSS loans that were covered by Maynilad's concession fees.

In the compromise deal, the government will get P8 billion—P2.75 billion in cash up front and P5.247 billion in equity—while ensuring the continued viability of Maynilad to serve its customers and pay off its debts.

Bird in hand

Even Salceda conceded that "from a purely MWSS corporate standpoint and assuming no legal problems" the best option would have been to take over and call in the \$120-million performance bond. But considering the circumstances, Salceda said the government was "better off with the deal than without it."

"Faced with a trade-off between 'a bird in hand' or two in the bush," the Macapagal administration chose the "bird in hand" with the prospects that this "one bird" will breed "more in the bush" in the future," Salceda said.

Unauthorized collections

Consumers, however, will never recover the P6.4 billion that Maynilad illegally collected from them in the last three years because of the compromise deal.

This amount pertains to Maynilad's unauthorized collection of P4.07 per cubic meter in foreign currency differential adjustment (FCDA) and P4.21 per cubic meter in accelerated extraordinary price adjustment (AEPA) that should have lapsed in December 2002 and in the event that the water utility was not paying the concession fees.

Clause 4.2 of Amendment No. 2 indicates that the illegal collections of the AEPA and FCDA shall be offset by the amount that Maynilad would have collected through the special transitory mechanism (STM).

The MWSS allowed Maynilad to collect the STM, which costs P3.30 per cubic meter, beginning Feb. 1, 2003. But the water firm refused to collect the STM because of its dispute with MWSS.

The FCDA, AEPA and STM are mechanisms set up by MWSS so Maynilad could recover its foreign exchange losses arising from its dollar-denominated loans.

"Provided that the STM collections were deducted from the AEPA and FCDA collections,

Maynilad would still owe P4.2 billion to its customers," Ibon Databank's analyst Arnold Padilla said.

Amendment No. 2, however, does not say if the Lopez-Suez consortium would refund its customers the said amount.

The Maynilad-MWSS deal has yet to be approved by the Quezon City Regional Trial Court, and the Securities and Exchange Commission.

Right to know

Invoking the people's right to know, two candidates for national office, a business club and a militant group demanded that a Quezon City judge reconsider his ruling and make public details of the government plan to take over Maynilad from the Lopezes.

Alyansa ng Pag-Asa presidential candidate Raul Roco slammed Quezon City Judge Reynaldo Daway for refusing to publicly disclose the rehabilitation deal that would transfer majority ownership of Maynilad to the government.

Citing the "sunshine principle," Roco said that anything exposed to sunlight would be free from bacteria. "But if you hide it in the dark, it will be full of maggots."

Public interest

Alyansa senatorial candidate Melanio "Batas" Mauricio Jr. said Daway's ruling on Wednesday to restrict access to the documents on the deal exclusively to the parties involved in the case violated the people's constitutionally guaranteed right to "information on matters of public concern."

He said the public would be affected by the deal because the government, "and eventually the Filipino people," would shoulder at least P8 billion in concession fees that Maynilad did not pay.

While Daway said that Amendment No. 2 to the concession agreement should be made available only to the creditors and the concerned parties, the parties involved in the case could release details of the deal to the public.

Seeks SC help

Mauricio said his camp tried to get a copy of the deal but Daway refused which prompted Mauricio to seek the help of the Supreme Court.

In a petition, Mauricio asked the high court to direct Daway of the Quezon City Regional Trial Court Branch 90 to allow the pub-

lic to "examine and photocopy" judicial records on the deal.

"Given the foregoing, the socio-political impact of the so-called bailout agreement entitles the public in general and the petitioner in particular, access to information on the terms of Amendment 2," Mauricio said.

"What the public needs is a direct first-hand information about the terms of Amendment 2 to prevent misinformation or, at the very least, to clarify burning issues of the day," he said.

Businessmen want to know

Makati Business Club executive director Guillermo Luz said that while water service was essential and should be carried out efficiently, the consumers should also be aware of what they were paying for.

"The contract should be made public. Who gave up what?" Luz said in an interview at the Manila Peninsula yesterday where the MBC and 13 other business groups met with presidential aspirant Eddie Villanueva.

Villanueva said that the seriousness and gravity of the government's plan to bail out Maynilad should be investigated by the judicial authorities.

Big secret

The militant fisherfolk group Pamalakaya said Daway should reconsider his decision "for truth and transparency's sake."

"The attitude of the court is opposed to national interest and against public opinion," Pamalakaya national chair Fernando Hicap said in a statement.

By ruling against the disclosure of the deal, the court faced a "trial by public opinion for favoring narrow interests over the concern of the majority," Hicap said.

"Is this secrecy over and above national interest and public trust even if parties involved committed foul play against millions of Maynilad customers?" he said.

Duty to public

Hicap also asked Maynilad's creditors to divulge details of the deal, saying it was their duty to inform the public.

"We don't want this controversy to be hidden from the public like a big mafia secret. All parties involved are required to come out in the open and tell exactly what happened to Maynilad and the concessions made to satisfy vested interests of the parties involved," he said. *With reports from Christine Gaylican and Blanche S. Rivera*



MUSLIMS for Roco welcome him in Naga, Zamboanga-Sibugay, where women on Thursday were celebrating Women's Day.

Traders see Brother Eddie in different, better light

From page A1

Romulo raised this scenario yesterday after the standard-bearer of Bangon Pilipinas delivered a speech before some 150 members of the business community at the Manila Peninsula Hotel in Makati.

"I must go by the current polls, and from there I have to conclude that at the moment, 'winnability' does not seem to be in the picture for [Villanueva]. But I am only going by the current polls. The polls in April may have very drastic changes because [the candidates] will have campaigned fully throughout the country," Romulo said.

Later, he added: "I think April will be a very different picture."

Romulo said the business community was seeking change and closely studying the programs of all the presidential candidates, including Villanueva's agenda of a righteous and graft-free government.

"I think the basis of all reforms is really the moral and ethical norms of any society, and that is the message I get from Bro. Eddie Villanueva's speech," Romulo said, adding: "I also get the message that as far as he is concerned, he will be a model president and therefore will have the moral power to push for change. And I think no one can argue with that."

'Horrible performance'

Villanueva is the second presidential candidate—after Raul Roco of the Alyansa ng Pag-Asa—to meet the representatives of the MBC and 13 other groups, including the European Chamber of Commerce, Bishops-Businessmen's Conference of the Philippines, Bankers Association of the Philippines, Chinese-Filipino Business Club and Management Association of the Philippines.

In his speech, the once staunch ally of President Macapagal-Arroyo said that if it were a company, the Macapagal administration displayed a "horrible performance" in the past three years.

Villanueva said the government had no capital expenditure in the past two years while the debt load rose by 43 percent in the last three years, with debt service eating up 81 percent of national revenues.

And yet, Villanueva said expressing disbelief, the chief executive officer of the "company" was courting the stakeholders' support for another six years of management after initially announcing her "retirement."

"The CEO seeks a new six-year term and says that the horrible performance of the past three years was just a down payment," he told his audience. "All that, plus the notorious reputation that the company has attained, was attributed to apprenticeship for the top job. What will you, the stockholders, do? I assume you

will go for change."

Villanueva urged the business community to take a second look at his platform and support his agenda for change.

He admitted that he was having problems with the "winnability" factor, and said this was because the other candidates were campaigning long before he was authorized by the Commission on Elections.

Anything is possible

"You cannot deny that his sincerity comes through," Romulo said of Villanueva. "Of course, he is a trained preacher, but no one can dissemble these things every day. I would say these elements are coming through."

Romulo observed that Villanueva, while a rookie in the presidential race, was already enjoying the backing of prominent members of the business community, like Luis Sison, who is serving as the evangelist's spokesperson; former Economic Planning Secretary Cielito Habito, one of his economic advisers; and Butch Albert, finance officer of Bangon Pilipinas.

"Everything boils down to leadership. If you have a leader who can inspire the nation through policy and action, anything is possible," Romulo said.

Friendly

Villanueva said he was the only presidential candidate who was "friendly" to all the other aspirants, and whose victory would not trigger resistance from the administration and opposition camps.

He said that should he win the presidency, he would be willing to tap the services of his rivals, like Roco for education and Sen. Panfilo Lacson for peace and order.

Jose Concepcion of the Bishops-Businessmen's Conference of the Philippines lauded Villanueva's call for healing and unity.

Concepcion, who also chairs the National Movement for Free Elections, echoed Villanueva in urging Filipinos to unite behind a leader, "whoever that may be," for the sake of economic development.

GMA next

Ms Macapagal is scheduled to meet with the MBC and the other business groups on April 14.

Romulo lamented that Lacson could not meet with the business community because of an earlier conflict in schedule. He said a follow-up proved futile because Lacson's representatives would not specify a date.

Movie idol Fernando Poe Jr., who is running neck and neck with Ms Macapagal in the surveys, sent two letters declining the invitation early on.

The MBC has arranged the meetings with the candidates in alphabetical order. But the President was scheduled last "out of protocol."

Manoling at it again

From page A1

And since Morato, ex-chair of the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board (MTRCB) and Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO), is rooting for President Macapagal-Arroyo, the other presidential aspirants are also necessary targets of his tirades.

Morato was recently appointed to the PCSO board.

He told the INQUIRER he could not see himself "in the same cage" as Siguion-Reyna, a film producer and former censor chief herself.

The MTRCB rules under Siguion-Reyna, who sat as chair during the administration of Joseph Estrada until his ouster in January 2001, "brought the entire nation to the animal kingdom," Morato said.

In the May 2001 elections, Morato, who was running for senator, challenged Siguion-Reyna, who was running for congresswoman in Makati, over the controversial sex film "Live Show," which was publicly shown in March 2001.

The MTRCB boss at the time was Nicanor Tiongson, but Morato pointed out that the policies in effect were still those enforced by Siguion-Reyna's board.

Morato, who chaired the MTRCB for six years until 1992, had sought Siguion-Reyna's imprisonment for "opening the doors to pornography."

Divided industry

"The local movie industry is definitely not solid behind Poe," said Morato. "It's terribly divided. You should hear show biz people calling me, saying they're only pretending to support FPJ because their movie contracts might be cancelled. Or people [close to Poe] could tell producers like Mother Lily (Monteverde of Regal Films) not to hire them. Can a poor young starlet antagonize Mother Lily?"

Morato said he would "definite-

ly not" vote for Poe. "Nothing personal," he explained. "I've known him for almost 35 years. He's my *compadre*, and when his wife Susan was single, I used to chaperone her. But that's beside the point."

Where the presidency was concerned, he said, Poe was "not capable, not qualified and not prepared [for the presidency]." He blamed the actor's handlers "for pushing him into this unfamiliar territory."

Bias against GMA rivals

Morato is just as prejudiced toward Ms Macapagal's three other rivals.

He said Sen. Panfilo Lacson's background and training were "not sufficient," because the presidency was not a simple matter of "policing" the nation. "I've known Ping Lacson since his MISG days

with (the late) Rolly Abadilla and Bobby Calinisan. I also cannot vote for him. Ping is trained for police matters. It takes a lot more than that [to be president]."

Former Education Secretary Raul Roco should not win either, Morato maintained: "A Jesuit professor in America once told our class that lawyers made the worst presidents. He said lawyers were trained to make something right wrong and something wrong right! So they will always find a way to justify whatever they do. Remember Marcos?"

Evangelist Eddie Villanueva "is a friend" and "makes sense," Morato conceded. "But I would not like him to be president because he is doing so well in winning souls all over the world. I would like to see him continue doing that because

that is his true calling."

Don't experiment

So why is he going all-out for President Macapagal-Arroyo? "I will serve only a president I believe in, as I did serve President Cory Aquino, President Ramos and now, President GMA," Morato said.

"Don't be selfish," he urged voters. "Choose the candidate who would be good enough for 82 million Filipinos [and not just a few]."

Quoting Estrada, Morato added: "Walang kai-kaibigan, walang kumpadre (forget friends and relations). Though he said that in a different context, we must apply it to the way we vote in the coming elections. Let us not gamble our future away again by experimenting on somebody who is not tried and tested."

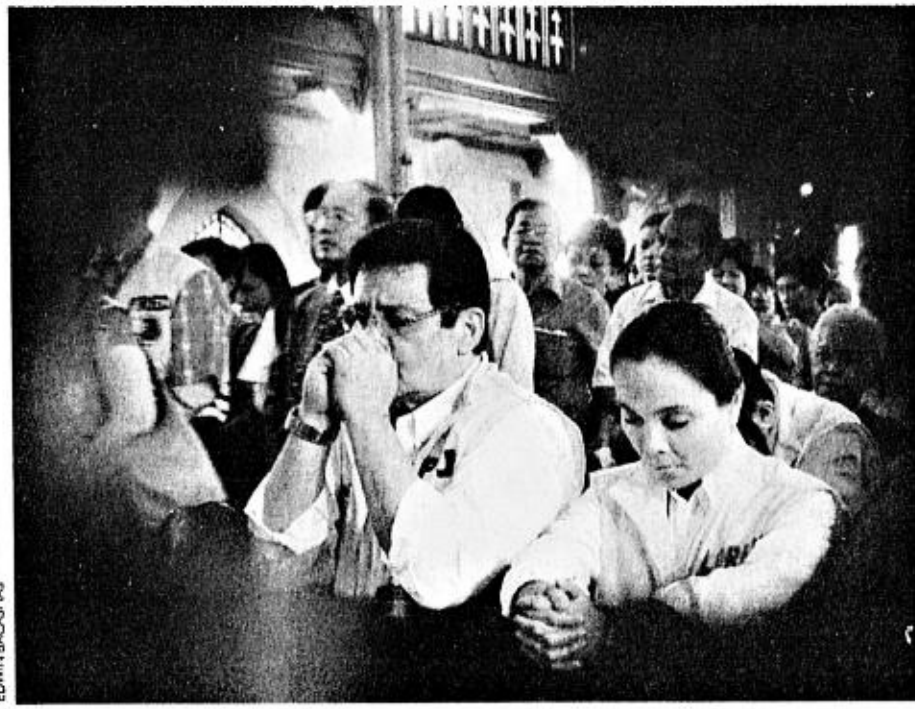


LOCAL boy who made good enough to run for the highest post in the land gets a rousing welcome from his fellow Caviteños in Cavite City where he attended the birthday celebration of Cavite Gov. Ireneo Maliksi (right).

THE CHARM OFFENSIVE

ELECTION
2004

KORONADAL CITY: Uncooperative weather never dampens the campaign spirit, as Poe and running mate Sen. Loren Legarda prove with a street dance in the rain.



ON THEIR KNEES. Before the proclamation rally at Pasay City's Cuneta Astrodome on Feb. 10, FPJ and LL pause for prayer at the Our Lady of Montserrat Abbey Church in San Beda College.

FPJ generates hysteria ...

From page A1

na (even with us around, FPJ gets scratched and cut, especially on his arms)," admits Telly Babas, "close-in" security, a really big and brawny man, like the ones that beat up his boss in the movies—wait a minute, he is a movie bit player!

On Sunday, Feb. 29, in the morning of the grand rally, the party was preparing for a motorcade around Legazpi City and then to Tabaco via Sto. Domingo, then back to Legazpi via Ligao and Daraga. The route normally took four hours of straight driving. This one would take the whole day and last until the evening.

Assembly place was the Peñaranda Park in front of Albay Cathedral "after Mass at 6:30 a.m.," according to the schedule, slipped under the door of media men's hotel rooms the night before. It said the motorcade would leave at 8.

The media men left their hotel at half past 7. Either they didn't care to hear Mass, or they knew better than to be punctual.

Most of the senatorial candidates were in church by 6:15, only to find that Poe had turned up for the 4:30 Mass. But they understood this "escape" completely. All too fresh in their minds was an incident in Manaoag, Pangasinan. People had followed FPJ into the church, clambering up pews, some even up the confessionals, to get a glimpse of the swashbuckling actor in prayer, and generally messing up the place.

Confidential

The previous day at Legazpi's Alicia Hotel, where the candidates were booked, Poe overheard Sen. Vicente "Tito" Sotto III, his personal campaign manager, giving instructions for a meet-up "after Mass tomorrow." Poe mumbled, "Confidential yon a." Apparently, he hadn't seen the schedule, where even the name of the officiating priest was spelled out.

"Sa kanya ko lang sinabi (I told only this one)," Sotto said in a rare moment of discomfiture. It actually sounded like an apology. The actor, wearing a towel around his neck, had just emerged from a function room where he met with relatives living in the Bicol region, from the Kelley side of the family. He was sunburned and coughing, and his voice was very hoarse.

Actor Eddie Garcia stayed behind in the function room. Is he a Kelley? No, he's a fast friend of FPJ's, and the relatives wanted snapshots with him, too.

Sotto had just wound up a press briefing aired live on local radio. Up till this point he had conducted all such briefings in Poe's behalf, alongside Sen. Loren Legarda, vice presidential candidate. This scenario would change in a few days, with Poe becoming more and more available to the media after the Supreme Court decided in his favor over the sensational disqualification case.

Sotto's comic best

But it has to be said: These briefings brought out Sotto's comic best. Wala raw salita si FPJ (it is said you can't get a word out of FPJ)?

Mabuti na'ng walang salita kesa walang isang salita, o maraming salita (that's better than a lot of words, or not a word you can count on).

Has the possibility of going low on funds, compared to the other camp, crossed your minds?

It has crossed our pockets, too.

But presidential candidate Ping Lacson, Poe's erstwhile "ally" in the opposition, has described Sotto's gab as more annoying than funny, perhaps because of such other quips as these:

Do you really believe FPJ's lack of schooling is not a problem?

"Of course. Ano ba'ng nagawa ng mga magna cum laude dyan? Magna, magna-nakaw!"

What happens if he is disqualified?

"That's a useless question."

Legarda is the opposite of the man of few words that is her running mate. Between her and Sotto, media notepads are quickly filled. Learning that the briefing was being broadcast live, she urged the newsmen to rush up the questions because "there should be no dead air on radio."

Sotto told a radio reporter trying to hand him a microphone: "Giving that to her or to me would be a mistake. We can talk for three hours straight."

And talk for almost an hour they did, most of the time saying in yet another way that Poe was the best choice there is for president: "honest," "sincere," "fiercely independent," "decisive," "his own man."

With them around, Poe need face the cameras only when he is feeling upbeat.

Ought to be a law

And so at 8 a.m. on that hot Sunday morning, the "floats" and about 50 other vehicles were in place. The candidates either waited in cool SUVs, or strolled around waving to passing jeepneys and working the crowd that had gathered.

At 8:15, Sotto told a journalist by phone that the motorcade would be late by maybe an hour. "We're on our way to the airport right now to pick up someone."

"There should be party rules covering these motorcades," muttered one candidate's staff. "First, it should always start on time." Second, she said, candidates should comply with the agreement allowing each a maximum of four vehicles.

"Tell that to Maceda," a motorcade participant replied. "He always has about 10."

Third, "No throwing anything from the vehicles, especially when there are a lot of children in the crowd. Mere candies have created such chaos."

At 9:10 the motorcade started moving, with 14 campaign jingles—one for each candidate—blaring simultaneously. At the head of the fleet was Jinggoy Estrada. The order of appearance routinely changed, but Estrada had kept his place because his was the truck with the most powerful sound system.

Poe and Legarda were in the last float, along with Eddie Garcia and the special guests picked up earlier from the airport,



QUEZON CITY SPORTS COMPLEX: A fan seizes the moment—a typical reaction to the presence of "Da King."

actors Eddie Gutierrez and Dolphy.

To the uninitiated, it was a great-traffic-stopping, people-drawing-kickoff. Not to the "regulars."

"This is nothing," said Bing Pimentel. "Compared to the crowd in San Carlos (Pangasinan) and Lubao (Pampanga), this is ... nothing."

Still, there was hardly a dull moment on the road to Tabaco. Albayanos turned out for the star-studded parade, the thickest crowds waiting in market areas and major junctions.

Whenever a loud commotion was heard coming from the direction of the last float, the vehicles in front of it slowed down, and so on down the line, because it meant Da King's truck had been besieged by fans.

At one point, an old man came running out of his house, pushed his way through the mob, and held out an empty bowl to Legarda—not asking for anything, just showing her there was nothing in it.

Burst into tears

One diehard admirer burst into tears: "Huwag kayong papadayal!" But a few others yelled, "Roco kamit!" or held up rival Raul Roco's hand signal. Bicolanos have always been known to support their own.

Certainly, it didn't look like all the people frantically reaching for the candidates' hands were going to vote for them, or were going to vote at all. What it seemed to be for the most part was a spectacle of celebrities—whose faces were seen on television and in newspapers—come to town.

The most recognizable naturally drew the most reaction. "Idol!" they called out to Lim. "Idol!" they called out to Pimentel. "Idol!" they called out to Enrile.

Less cooperative was the weather, alternately wet from sudden showers and hot from the capricious early summer sun. Thus, the candidates kept popping in and out of their perches on the floats.

Under one roof during the stop in Tabaco were Fernando Poe Jr., Dolphy, Judy Ann Santos, Eddie Garcia, Eddie Gutierrez, Boots Anson-Roa, Tito Sotto and Armida Siguion-Reyna. It could well have been a location shoot for "Pandang sa Albay."

Former Commission on Elections chief Harriet Demetriou was hosting lunch at

SUSAN ROCES gives her husband a hug in advance of other women who can hardly wait to do the same.

her grand home on Berces Street for the KNP and its local supporters.

At one of the tables set out on the terrace sat some of the senatorial candidates, extolling the stamina of Juan Ponce Enrile who, at 80, was the most senior among them.

"I play golf, I go water-skiing," JPE said, smiling broadly. "Besides, I'm used to this (campaigning). I've done this many, many times."

Someone recalled that Robert Jaworski had fallen ill the first time he ran for the Senate, because his body was used to an athlete's fixed routine. Campaigning was a whole new ballgame for him.

Boots Anson-Roa at the next table was explaining one "basic" difference between FPJ's appeal and Erap's. "Erap played a variety of characters in the movies, including anti-heroes. FPJ has only played the good guy from the start. This is how the people consistently see him."

Poe, again wearing a towel around his neck, came in, shook hands and made small talk all around, and sat down to lunch. Miraculously, autograph and "Kodak" hunters were kept at bay.

A half hour later, Legarda and Sotto held the usual press briefing while FPJ and his buddies—the two Eddie Gs and Dolphy—retired to a room upstairs.

Electric

Big movie stars can't help it: they generate some kind of electricity when they pass by. And so the whole town soon knew exactly where they were.

The street in front of the Demetriou home had filled up with locals, including peanut and "malamig" vendors, looking up to the balcony on the second floor. What the schedule said was "private time," became opportunity for a mini-rally, with senatorial candidate Francisco "Kit" Tatad emceeing in the dialect.

Jinggoy did his Erap bit, Jamby Madrigal her "Juday" routine with the actress at her side, Maceda his take on the Viva Hot Babes' "Bulaklak," and so on, until ... Legarda sang "Kahit Kaunting Pagtingin," and Poe deliv-

Case of missing ...

From page A1

Community coordinator Jay Lim of Tanggol Kalikasan-Southern Luzon, a public interest environmental law center, said barristers from Kenya, Sri Lanka, Malaysia and Indonesia were startled when told that the trickling water beneath the vines and shrubs in front of them used to be the majestic Cristallino Falls.

Lim told newsmen: "They were shocked. They kept asking, 'Where's the falls?' I could not hide my embarrassment. I had to assure them that not all waterfalls in the country had suffered the same fate."

Saving face

And to save face, he said, he painstakingly explained to the visitors multi-sectoral efforts to save and protect Banahaw, often called "Mystical Mountain."

Lim had taken on a guided tour of the site several foreign participants in the 4th All-Asia Public Interest Law Conference being held at Villa Escudero in Tiaong town.

Cristallino Falls is on the mountain's Dolores town side. With its crystal-clear waters, the falls used to be the first stop for

ered his "Kahit Butas ng Karayom / Kapag Puno na ang Salop" address. These last three are titles of FPJ movie hits.

Where's my ride?

Departing Berces Street was an ordeal for the motorcade drivers and their passengers who couldn't locate the vehicles obscured by the crowd. Never mind following the car sequence now; first thing was to get out of there, everyone in "closed vehicles." Once the motorcade hit the highway, the participants would regroup on a stretch of road where no crowds were expected. Candidates would transfer to their floats, and the motorcade would resume.

Word had definitely gotten around by now. Thicker crowds lined the highway, closing in on each vehicle at traffic jams and pounding on it, asking for T-shirts or caps, wanting to shake a hand-any hand. Filipinos like to touch.

Source of energy

Oddly enough, this manic crowd reaction was part of a political candidate's well of energy. Every return of the hand signal, every enthusiastic wave, every smile of recognition, works like a vitamin pill. To get a taste of it, passengers in the motorcade's "covered" cars rolled down their windows intermittently and held out an arm with the index finger pointed up.

Back in Legazpi City, nearly two hours behind schedule, the candidates dispersed for some real "private time" at last, prior to the grand rally.

Over supper of fruits and fish in a friend's home, Bing Pimentel teased her husband: "You must say hello to Eddie Gutierrez later. He's your compare; you were a sponsor at Ruffa's wedding."

"Yes, I know," Nene retorted.

"But this afternoon you shook hands with Dolphy and Eddie Garcia, and skipped Eddie Gutierrez," Bing said, laughing.

Nene replied, this time bemused: "Gan'un ba (is that right)?"

Post script: Is that FPJ?

On the third day of the Bicol sortie, the INQUIRER was set for a brief sit-down with "Da King" but learned early enough that he left Legazpi at 2:30 a.m. What about the Catanduanes and Sorsogon legs of the campaign? Did Susan Roces call? Had the Supreme Court handed down its decision? Had the escape stunts become a habit?

The high tribunal's favorable ruling, issued the next afternoon, gave birth to a new, improved FPJ. With revived confidence, he has since laid out his much-awaited platform. He has been giving more, and more fiery, speeches, and mapping out intensified campaign strategies designed to cover more ground in less time. He has even been taking Susan Roces along.

In short, he looks more determined to see his quest through. Maybe tomorrow, he will even sign up for all manner of presidential debate and "job interview." Hope springs eternal.

Violence ushers in local polls campaign

From page A1

the toilet in the church compound when two men approached and asked him if he was the vice mayor.

"I took that as a cue and ran as fast as I could," said Tan, a supporter of former Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson, who is again seeking the governor's post under the ruling Lakas-CMD.

Mayoral candidate Ellen Cabato said she saw two men on a scooter leaving the church compound shortly after the shooting.

Mayor Edgar Florendo and Tan's rival for vice mayor, Ponciano Reyes Jr., were not present at the signing of the peace covenant.

Florendo said on radio that he and Reyes were preparing to go to the church for the ceremony when they learned about the shooting.

Singson, who visited Tan in the hospital, said he had urged local candidates not to go into vendetta killings.

In Isabela, police formed teams to go after the killers of Rosenelli Baccay, captain of Barangay San Antonio in Cabagan, her husband Nestor, and barangay residents Juancho Patla, Jaime Tallod, Imelda de los Santos and Nanding Buraga.

Waylaid

Investigators said the Baccays and their companions were heading to the wake of a San Antonio resident when they were waylaid at 7 p.m. on Wednesday.

The injured were identified as Apolinario Soriano, Jerry Doriaga, Jerry Quilang, Junjun Quilang, Juana Allauigan, Margie Madayag and Aida Patla. They were taken to the Milagros District Hospital in Cabagan and the Cayagan Valley Medical Center in Tuguegarao City.

The AP reported that the gunmen fired on the open minibus carrying the group and fled.

Police found empty shells from M-16 and M-14 Armalite rifles and .45 cal. pistols at the ambush site.

47 deaths

Chief Supt. Joel Goltiao, spokesperson of the Philippine National Police, said there had been 47 election-related deaths and 110 injuries since the start of the election period on Dec. 15.

The PNP said it had intensified election security measures, and confiscated more than 1,000 weapons and arrested 1,198 violators during the same period.

In Abra, police seized four "baby Armalite" rifles, a .38 cal. super pistol, a .38 cal. revolver and a number of bullets allegedly owned by Barangay Captain Ryan Luna.

But Luna denied owning the guns. With reports from Villamor Visaya Jr. and Artha Kira Paredes, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau; AP

mountaineers and pilgrims seeking to cool down with a shower or quench their thirst.

"Several years ago, one could still hear the roar of the waterfall," Lim said. "Now we have no choice but to temporarily seal some major parts of the mountain to protect them from intrusion."

Closure

The Protected Area Management Board, a multi-sectoral group tasked by the government to safeguard the area, passed a resolution two weeks ago that would enforce a five-year closure, starting this Holy Week, of Mounts Banahaw and San Cristobal Protected Landscape.

Manny Calayag, Dolores town municipal and natural resources officer, earlier stressed that one of the board's aims was to save the mountain from further destruction, which contaminates the town's water source.

At least 35 foreign environmentalists lawyers from 14 countries were attending the international conference. The secretariat said two other groups visited Tayabas Bay and Taal Volcano, where conservation is also being attempted through integrated area management.

SUERTRES

SIX DIGIT (In exact order)

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E-mail: pr_metro@inquirer.com.ph

METRO

Editor Abelardo S. Ulanday

SUPERLOTTO 6/49

12 14 24 28 38 41

**PROTEST AGAINST BAILOUT**

Members of militant groups show their disgust over the bailout by the Macapagal administration of the Maynilad Water Services during a rally held Thursday in front of the water firm's office in Quezon City. The protesters later tried to storm the firm's gate but were prevented by security guards.

JOAN BONDOC

Illegal poll posters fall as 'Oplan Baklas' starts

By Tina Santos, Tarra Quismundo, Leila Salaverria and Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

AT LEAST 38 people have been arrested for allegedly putting up campaign materials in non-designated areas of the campaign period for local posts officially kicked off yesterday.

According to the National Capital Region Police Office (NCR-PO), the violators were taken to police stations after they were caught posting campaign materials in Manila, Quezon City and Caloocan City.

The move is part of "Oplan Baklas."

Of those arrested, 15 were rounded up along V. Mapa Street, Peralta Street, P. Sanchez Street, Bataan and Leyte Streets, all in Sta. Mesa, between 1 and 4 a.m., while the rest were nabbed in Caloocan and in different areas in Quezon City.

The suspects would be charged with violation of the Omnibus Election Code.

Warning renewed

NCRPO Director Ricardo de Leon reiterated his warning to supporters of candidates to refrain from placing campaign materials in restricted places.

"Electoral rules and regulations will be strictly implemented to ensure that all are afforded fair and equal opportunities in campaigning for local and national posts," De Leon said.

He added that the authorities have started tearing down illegally placed posters and campaign materials that are expected to sprout in the city.

The prohibited areas include



SUPPORTERS of Manila mayoralty candidates Alberto Lopez and incumbent Mayor Joselito Atienza whoop it up in Thursday's rites to kick off the election campaign for local posts.

JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

schools, shrines, main thoroughfares, walls of public structures that are in active use, trees and electric posts.

In a big city like Quezon City, however, the INQUIRER observed that the posters still find their way in walls and electric posts.

Metropolitan Manila Development Authority street cleaners could be seen cleaning the walls. But after a few days, a new batch of posters would be pasted and the MMDA cleaners would be back to clean the walls.

Caloocan roundup

At least nine persons were arrested in Caloocan City after they were caught pasting campaign posters in areas outside designated areas.

The arrested persons were caught in Barangays 178 and 186

in north Caloocan City during an operation which began before midnight Wednesday until early yesterday, city police chief Benjardi Mantele said.

Mayor Rey Malonzo said the local government would assist the local Comelec to strictly enforce the "Oplan Baklas" drive.

Manila sweep

In a seven-hour sweep of Manila's streets at dawn yesterday, Comelec officers, policemen and barangay tanods removed illegally placed campaign posters all over the city.

A composite team of Operation Baklas swooped down on campaign posters pasted or hung on walls, lampposts and electric posts not declared as common poster areas.

"It was a Manila-wide opera-

tion. There were many offenders. The monitoring would continue day and night," said Election Officer IV Rosalinda Radin, one of the officials who led the operations.

Some 31 Comelec officers, 14 Manila policemen, and barangay tanods composed the team that would conduct the operations for the next 45 days.

During the operation, the team had to pull and tear down several posters, from the simple ones made from rice sacks, printed cardboard, to ones similar to movie posters plastered onto sheets of plywood.

Meanwhile, a total of 323 people were arrested at checkpoints for violating the Comelec's gun ban. Of those nabbed, 302 were civilians, 12 were members of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, and nine were police personnel.

She doesn't know yet she lost her right foot

By Luige del Puerto

OLIVIA Lumban, the 65-year-old woman whose feet were smashed by a concrete slab which fell off from a condominium in Pasig City on Tuesday, does not know yet that her right foot has been amputated.

"When she woke up today, she asked why the doctor only cleaned her left foot, and ignored her right foot," Lumban's daughter, Carmelita Balabana, said in a phone interview yesterday.

"She still doesn't know the doctors cut it off," she said.

Balabana said her mother was unconscious during the operation. She spent most of her time sleeping since the time she was transferred to the Mercado General Hospital in Tanauan, Batangas, from the Medical City in Mandaluyong.

Family members and the doctors earlier decided to cut the right foot off to prevent complica-

tions, she said.

"She has spoken and eaten now," Balabana. "But she can't move much."

Physicians are still observing Lumban's left foot, where only a small portion of the flesh remains.

"It could feel, and that's the good thing. The bad news is that doctors are worried about a portion of the foot that has blackened," she said. "We hope it doesn't have to be cut off, too."

Meanwhile, the police are set to ask today the Pasig City Engineer's Office to inspect the Horizon Condominium on Meralco Avenue following the incident.

The debris, part of the concrete barrier at the terrace of the 22nd floor, tore through the aluminum sheet of a passing jeepney where Lumban and 11 others were on.

It smashed her feet, breaking her bones and tearing off her muscles.

Poll drive snarls traffic flow

HEAVY traffic marred the first day of local campaign in northern Metro Manila. Aside from the motorcades of some candidates which clogged traffic, several main roads were also closed to give way to campaign rallies.

In Caloocan City, mayoralty candidates Rep. Enrico Echiverri and Rep. Edgar Erice held simultaneous motorcades about 8 a.m. yesterday, while another mayoralty candidate, Gigi Malonzo, attended the inauguration of the city project Diosdado Macapagal Memorial Medical Center about 3

a.m. with her husband, incumbent Mayor Rey Malonzo.

Macario Assistio Jr., who is also running for mayor, did not have any major activity in the first campaign day.

Because of the inauguration of the new city hospital, which was scheduled the same day as the first local campaign day, the entire stretch of A. Mabini Road from corner Samson Road to corner C3 Road was closed to motorists.

Jeepneys plying the Sangandaan-Divisoria route were rerout-

ed to other roads, jamming traffic and leaving passengers going to A. Mabini walking several meters or getting on tricycles, which suddenly increased fares.

In Malabon City, the stretch of C4 Road from corner Letre Road to corner M. Naval Street in Navotas was closed for an El Shaddai prayer rally. The road, a main route for motorists going to Navotas, was closed about 7 a.m. until midnight. Motorists were rerouted to the narrow streets of Lapu-Lapu and Rizal avenues.

Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

'Kinse' ad maker files raps vs Lim

By Margaux Ortiz

A TOP official of Destileria Limtuo yesterday filed charges of malicious mischief against senatorial candidate Alfredo Lim for "deliberately causing damage" to two of the company's Napoleon Quince billboards on Roxas Boulevard earlier this week.

In her complaint-affidavit filed before the Parañaque City Prosecutor, Destileria executive vice president Olivia Limpe-aw sought P26 million in moral and exemplary damages from Lim.

Limpe-aw said the respondent, "acting with hate, revenge and other evil motives," deliberately caused damage by ripping off the word "kinse" from the billboards which carry the ad.

She said the company suffered an actual damage amounting to P350,000 with the destruction of the billboards.

Meanwhile, women from various religious organizations have joined the fight against the controversial Napoleon Brandy "Kinse Años" ad as they rallied in front of the Destileria Office in Balintawak, Quezon City, yesterday.

The Catholic Bishops Conference-Office on Women, Ecumenical Women's Forum, Promotion for Church People's Response and militant group Gabriela led the rally, where they held a noise barrage to stop the showing of the brandy's commercial.

"As long as the owners of Napoleon Brandy refuse to pull out their offensive ads, we will campaign among Filipino consumers to boycott all products of Destileria," the protesters said.

EWf, a broad network of church-based women organizations—both Catholic and Protestant—declared that boycott campaign posters criticizing the ad will be circulated in the different churches, grocery stores and other public places nationwide. With a report from Tina Santos

Meralco: Pole down due to road diggings

THE MANILA Electric Company said yesterday it should not be blamed for the electric post that fell down in Makati City on Wednesday.

The incident, referred to by Meralco as pole down, occurred at an area along Pasay Road near the New World Hotel at around 1:30 p.m.

Several persons were reported to have been hurt in the accident. Meralco's vice president and Corporate Communication Chief Elpi Cuna Jr. said in a statement that Meralco is not to blame for the pole down.

Initial results of investigations disclosed that the most likely cause of the pole down was the excavation works being done near the site of the accident.

The said excavation weakened the foundation of a Meralco pole, which eventually gave way, pulling down an adjacent pole approximately two spans away.

The victims were rushed to the Makati Medical Hospital immediately after the accident.

Cuna said that Meralco has already coordinated with the victims of the accident to provide the necessary assistance. Cuna further remarked, "We are doing this in the spirit of public service."

**ROAD HOG**

Some commuters are asking if the Rizal Commercial Banking Corp. has been given special privileges to install this long row of permanent concrete barriers along Buendia Ave. and Geronimo St. fronting the multi-story bank building in Salcedo Village, Makati City, and apparently causing traffic jams and inconvenience to commuters.

JIM GUIAO PUNZALAN

Ex-Assemblyman Logarta, 75

FORMER Assemblyman Mariano R. Logarta of Cebu died last March 24 at the Capitol Medical Center after a prolonged illness. He was 75.

Logarta, one of the original founders of the National Press Club, is survived by wife Lita T. Logarta and children Louie, John, Jorge and Corazon, Margie, Michele and Nanette, grandchildren and other relatives.

During his lifetime, Logarta served in various capacities in both private and government agencies.

His ashes can be found at the mortuary of the Santa Maria Della Strada Parish Church on Katipunan Rd., Loyola Heights, Quezon City. Interment is on Sunday, March 28, after the 11 a.m. Mass at the Loyola Memorial Park in Marikina.

METROBRIEFS

5 hijackers killed

FIVE men who allegedly hijacked a truck loaded with P200,000 worth of sacks of rice were killed early yesterday when they traded shots with pursuing policemen in Barangay Pungo, Calumpit, Bulacan. Supt. Arnold Gunnacao, Bulacan police intelligence and investigation chief, identified only two suspects: Jeffrey Delumen and Roberto Manzano. A Manila-bound Isuzu truck loaded with 210 sacks of rice that came from Nueva Ecija was hijacked by the five men at Barangay Taal in nearby Pulilan town at 11:30 p.m. on Wednesday. After dumping the truck driver and his helpers, the suspects fled. Senior Supt. Felizardo Serapio Jr., Bulacan police director, immediately issued an alarm to different police units to track down the suspects. Gunnacao and his team, including a police team from this town, caught the suspects in Barangay Pungo at 2 a.m. Thursday.

Carmela Reyes

Ex-NBI man held

A FORMER employee of the National Bureau of Investigation has been arrested in an entrapment operation for allegedly giving counterfeit NBI credentials to applicants who wanted to be confidential agents in exchange for a fee. Nabbed by agents of the NBI Special Task Force was Arnel Lorenzo, 36, of Barangay San Dionisio in Parañaque. Lorenzo was arrested based on the complaints of three men, who told investigators that Lorenzo and a certain Rolando "Toto" Adrias introduced themselves

as NBI agents and enticed the three to become confidential agents. The complainants were asked to pay P25,000 each and were given NBI papers and badges which turned out to be fake.

Leila Salaverria

No MRT runs

METROSTAR Express would suspend operations from April 7 to 10 and resume regular service on April 11, Easter Sunday, according to the railway system. Metrostar Express, also known as Edsa Metro Rail Transit 3, would undergo major maintenance works on its facilities and equipment during the Holy Week break, said MRT 3 general manager Roberto Lastimoso. MRT 3 had been taking advantage of the season of Lent, when passenger volume was low, to conduct maintenance work.

Clarissa S. Batino

Death on a bridge

A SEAMAN never made it home on Wednesday evening when his vehicle slammed into a trailer truck that was waiting to unload container vans in a port terminal in Manila late Wednesday evening. Killed in the accident was Lody Siababa, 40, of Gerona Street in Tondo. Investigation by SPO2 Rodrigo Tiblo showed that Siababa was driving his Toyota Revo (CPR 794) at the southbound lane of the Del Pan Bridge in Tondo around 11:30 p.m. when he slammed into the trailer truck which was falling in line behind other trucks waiting to load or unload their container vans at the Asian Terminal Inc. in the Port Area.

Leila Salaverria

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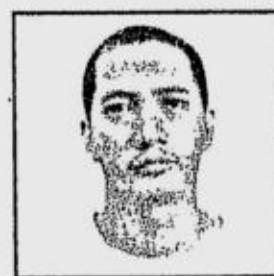
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Marikina City



**PASCUAL,
NOEMI C.**
156 Brgy. Bisig,
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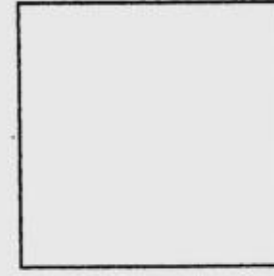
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BASKETBALL: NBA Greatest Games-Kings vs Lakers, Game 6, 2003 Western Finals; 9 a.m.; Solar Sports—LA extends series to a decisive Game 7 in Sacramento.

NBA-Pistons vs Spurs; 9:30 a.m.; Star Sports; Wizards vs Clippers; 11:30 a.m.; Solar Sports—Detroit and San Antonio engage in a clash of titans while league-whipping boys Washington and LA try to add an elusive win to their records at the expense of the other.
Schedules subject to change without prior notice.

SPORTS TV

Compiled by L. Mangulat

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A25

E-mail: pr_sports@inquirer.com.ph

Editor Teddyvic S. Melendres
Assistant Editor Edwin M. Villanueva

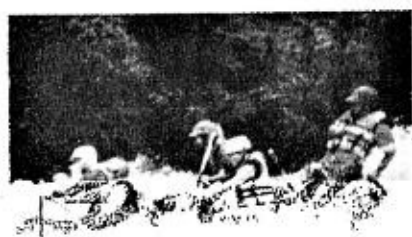
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WHAT'S INSIDE



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PACQUIAO (right) strikes a pose with Marquez at a Los Angeles news conference announcing their IBF and WBA title bout in Las Vegas on May 8. AP

L.A. FACEOFF

Pacquiao, foe trade barbs

THERE was no shortage of verbal tussles yesterday when Filipino champion Manny Pacquiao and WBA-IBF featherweight titlist Juan Manuel Marquez met for the first time during a press conference launching their 12-round showdown on May 8 at the MGM Grand Hotel and Casino in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Pacquiao, dapper in a sky-blue polo and sporting an expensive wristwatch, was accompanied by promoter Murad Muhammad and trainer Freddie Roach during the press presentation held at the Westin Bonaventure Hotel in Los Angeles.

Marquez showed up in a dark suit accompanied by his promoter Bob Arum of Top Rank and trainer Nacho Beristain.

Marquez, as quoted by Fightnews,

opened fire by declaring: "There will be fire in the ring on May 8th. It took a lot for me to become a World Champion and only in death will I relinquish my belts! Manny is a great fighter, but I am fighting not only for myself but my wife, my children, my parents and all of my country!"

When it was his turn, Pacquiao said: "Marquez is a great fighter and I respect him as the

PACQUIAO/A28

Eala cuts short ban on Torion

ALL WILL soon be well for Jimwell Torion.

Philippine Basketball Association commissioner Noli Eala has favorably acted on the appeal of the suspended Red Bull guard, giving the controversial Cebuano the go-signal to return to action on April 18, or almost five months before his suspension without pay is to end.

Eala made the announcement yesterday in a press conference prior to the Barako's road game against Alaska Milk in Cebu City, drawing cheers from Torion's hometown fans who had long missed the excitement he brings into the games.

"I believe we have already sent a strong message (to Torion and to all the players that the PBA will not tolerate improper conduct on and off the court)," said Eala. "Clearly, we've seen that Jimwell has been very remorseful and, hopefully, he has learned his lesson from the suspension."

"I want to thank the commissioner for considering my appeal. I've learned my lesson and it won't happen again," said Torion.

"It was by far the most difficult moment of my career. As for Jimmy, I am very sorry for what I have done," said Torion, who was earlier suspended for drug

use and had to undergo rehabilitation before he was reinstated last year.

Torion, who hails from Argao, Cebu, lost at least P1.1 million in basic salary on top of a P70,000 fine.

Incidentally, the 5-8 Cebuano star will return to action at the Araneta Coliseum in a game against Talk 'N Text—the same team Red Bull faced when Torion drew one of the stiffest penalties ever slapped a player in league history.

Torion was slapped with an eight-month ban when he lunged at Jimmy Alapag with a clothesline tackle that broke the TNT guard's nose last Nov. 19

EALA/A30

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ASAP Mania show ushers in Unity Cup

ABS-CBN's top-rated variety show, ASAP Mania, will provide the perfect appetizer to the opening of the PBL Unity Cup on Sunday at the Makati Coliseum when it stages a mini-concert that features some of the network's popular stars.

The segment is part of a package of surprises being arranged by Studio 23, the

league's official coveror.

Among the network's stars expected to entertain fans are Rica Peralejo and some of the show's rising performers.

The ASAP segments, to be shown live on Channel 2, will begin at 12 noon and fans are advised to go to the venue early to have a better view of the bonus show. Admission will be open to the public.

"We in the PBL and our new partner, Stu-

dio 23, are doing everything to make the opening a big success. I have no doubt about the capabilities of Studio 23, so I'm sure the fans will have a great time during the opening," said commissioner Chino Trinidad.

Leo Katigbak, managing director of Studio 23 and Peter Musngi, head of the ABS-CBN Sports Division, promised to give all-out support to the league.

Veteran director Abet Ramos, who will

handle the TV coverage, said they would use state-of-the-art equipment to capture all angles and color of each game.

"We will try to improve the production through graphics, *parang pang-international ang coverage namin dito*," he said.

Viva Mineral Water-FEU, touted as one of the teams to beat in the season-opening tournament, will test the mettle of newcomer Toyota Otis-Letran in the curtain raiser at

1 p.m. while Lee Pipes-Ateneo, another newcomer, battles Sunkist-UST at 4 p.m.

Defending champion Hapee Toothpaste starts its defense on Tuesday next week against Montaña Pawnshop, a team raring to shed its image as poor finishers.

After the opening ceremonies, teams not scheduled to play on Sunday will be stationed at one place inside the venue so their fans will have time to interact with them.

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Barakos foil Aces in heated contest

GAMES TOMORROW (Makati Coliseum)
4 p.m.—Purefoods vs FedEx
6:15 p.m.—Coca Cola vs Talk 'N Text

By June Navarro

CEBU City—Red Bull Barako survived the ejection of Junmy Valenzuela in an intensity-filled encounter by hammering out a 95-93 win over Alaska in the Gran Matador Fiesta Conference at the Cebu City Coliseum here.

Don Allado missed a potential game-clinching triple in the dying seconds, allowing the Barakos to escape with their fourth win in six games.

The Aces, who trailed by as many as 14 points before recovering in the fourth quarter through the efforts of Brandon Cablay, dropped to 5-2.

Valenzuela was thrown out with still four minutes left in the first period after a flagrant foul on Galen Young.

Enrico Villanueva then gave a hard foul on a driving Young, prompting players from both teams to react violently with Valenzuela giving the Alaska import a shove.

A brief scuffle that nearly emptied both benches ensued, with Peek and Villanueva putting up a fighting stance.

The Aces dropped their fifth straight game on the road. In contrast, the Barakos won their fifth straight out-of-town game.



TUGADE provided ample support.

Deangelo Collins was a non-factor in the fourth but still paced the Barakos with 19 points. He, however, showed improvement from his debut

performance against the Barangay Ginebra Gin Kings, whom the Barakos also beat on Saturday.

Cablay scored six points in an 11-5 run as the Aces threatened, 94-93, with 11 ticks left.

Mick Pennisi got hacked by Rob Duat and split his charities before Allado flubbed his three-pointer on the other end.

Lordy Tugade supported Collins with 17 points, while Villanueva and Pennisi chipped in 12 and 11, respectively.

Valenzuela, who was a big contributor in Red Bull's last few games, wound up scoreless due to his limited exposure.

Their collective effort negated the combined 62 points of Young (23), Peek (21) and Cablay (18).

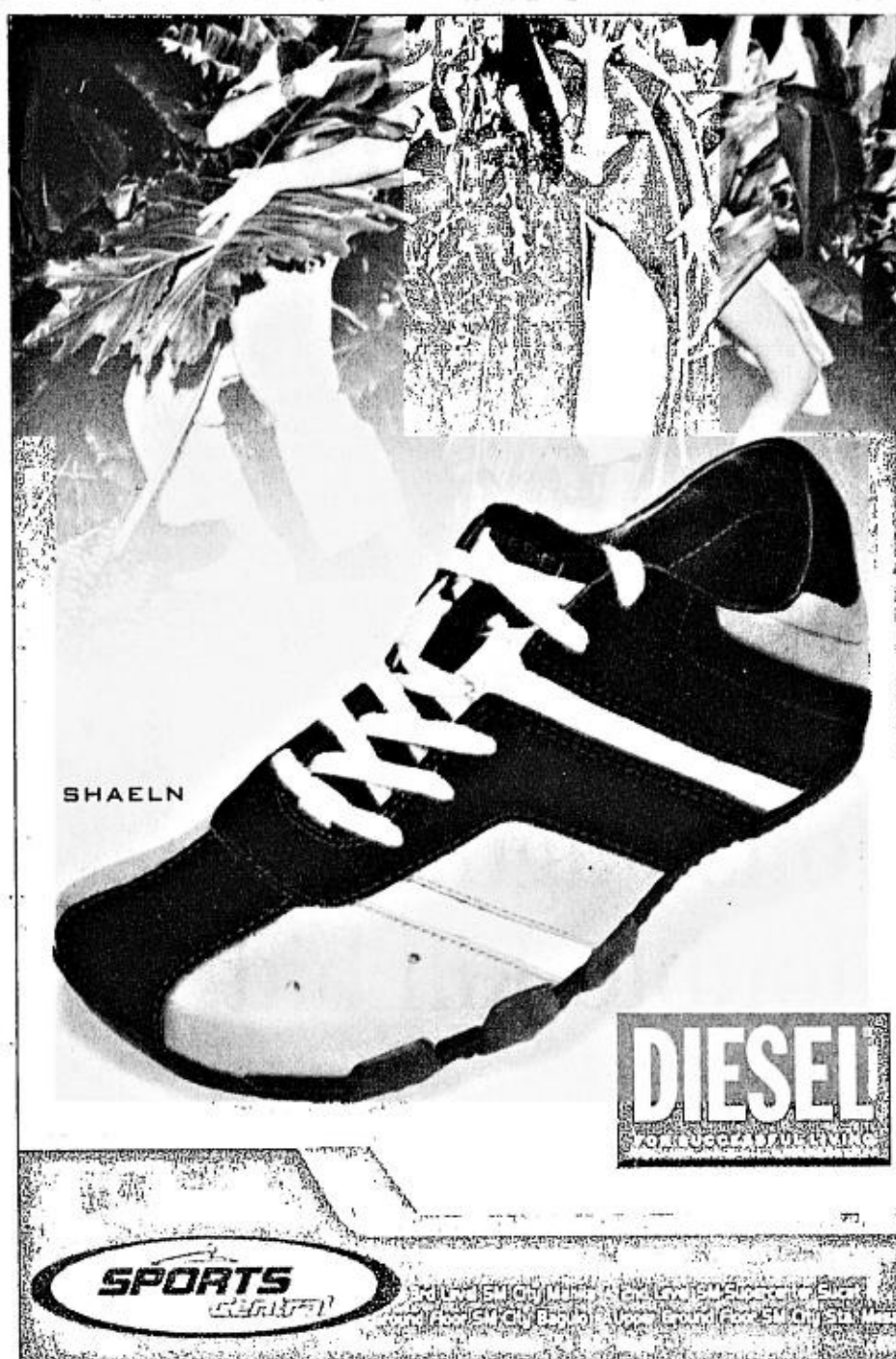
The tournament resumes tomorrow with a twin-bill at the Makati Coliseum.

Tangling at 4 p.m. are Purefoods and FedEx followed by the Coca-Cola-Talk 'N Text tussle at 6:15 p.m.

Scores:
RED BULL 95—Collins 19, Tugade 17, Villanueva 12, Pennisi 11, Robinson 8, Asaytono 7, Harp 6, Bagueo 6, Se 4, Ordoño 3, Lopez 2, Valenzuela 0.

ALASKA 93—Young 23, Peek 21, Cablay 18, Thoss 10, Allado 7, Cortez 6, Duat 4, Feihl 4, Wilson 0, Padilla 0.

Quarters: 26-22, 54-42, 79-66, 95-93.



Buddy bombshell

BUDDY Andrada unloaded quite a mouthful over dzSR 918 (Sports Radio) on Tuesday during the PSA Forum at the Manila Pavilion.

Buddy's bone of contention was, Cito Dayrit had manufactured a constitution that would make Cito Dayrit president for life of the Philippine Olympic Committee (POC).

Cito Dayrit is the incumbent POC president. He is generally perceived to seek reelection after the Athens Olympics in August this year.

"He cannot be beaten anymore," said Buddy Andrada. "Mr. Dayrit has practically made himself a dictator, a president for life of the POC."

Buddy made his argument on an amendment to the POC constitution that disqualifies prospective opponents of Cito Dayrit. One of those he mentioned as a prospective candidate but is ineligible to run is Peping Cojuangco, president of the equestrian association.

"Even the provision on removing a POC president has been de-railed," said Buddy. "Imagine, a POC president can only be removed now by a ¾ vote from the POC member-delegates during the general assembly."

He said the old provision was a "simple majority to oust a POC president."

After hearing Buddy Andrada drop his bombshell over dzSR, I was almost tempted to call the Manila Pavilion and then have me connected to the PSA Forum to ask Buddy Andrada how those new provisions came to be.

I did try to get some reaction from Cito Dayrit but, unfortunately, I don't have Cito Dayrit's new cell phone number. Neither do I have Buddy Andrada's number. Anyway, the two gentlemen know where to reach me. If it's not much of a request, could you please get in touch with me? Thank you.

But to pursue Buddy Andrada's argument, my question is, if those new provisions on the constitution regarding the POC presidency are true, have they been adopted during the POC general assembly? Otherwise, if they were merely amended or inserted by Cito Dayrit into the constitution without the concurrence of the POC general assembly, then they are deemed illegal and therefore null and void from the very beginning.

The Marcos ghost still haunts our now democratically installed systems 18 years after Edsa 1?

I don't think so. But I do not want to think though that Buddy Andrada did what he did because he is also perceived as running for POC president to oppose Cito Dayrit, who was his buddy for

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza



years until they had a falling out some months back.

I have never known Buddy Andrada to indulge in politicking. He fights fair and square and, most of the time, he wins his battles. In fact, he is presently the president of the Asian Tennis Federation. His stature and reputation has made Mitsubishi Motors Philippines a consistent Philta ally in the annual Mitsubishi International Junior Tennis Championship, which will unfurl anew on April 1.

To refresh your memory, Buddy Andrada was appointed by Cito Dayrit as the country's chief de mission to the Sydney Olympics in 2000. I was in Sydney and I had watched how their partnership did wonders for the RP delegation: No hitches for anybody, not even a minor one.

But not long after the Sydney Olympics, though, the two started arguing over matters that principally touched on Cito Dayrit's style of management. Soon, the word was out that Buddy Andrada had bolted Cito Dayrit's camp. In the last Bisan Asian Games in 2002, the tennis players failed to make it and it was the general sentiment that Cito Dayrit had a hand in it.

In the ongoing deliberations by a committee formed by Cito Dayrit to select which disciplines are to be played in the 2005 SEA Games that we would be hosting, tennis was not in the list again.

I don't know if Cito Dayrit had a hand in that but whether we like it or not, it is perceived he had.

You can't therefore blame Buddy Andrada for his combative stance.

FASTBREAK. Gov. Manny Piñol of North Cotabato has personally delivered a letter to the National Golf Association of the Philippines requesting the NGAP to make Palos Verdes of Davao City the venue for the SEA Games golf competition next year. A very commendable move, Pareng Gob. Palos Verdes is an excellent course—a championship course, if you ask me. I just hope that Palos Verdes starts applying for NGAP membership now as only NGAP member-clubs are considered candidates to host NGAP-organized events, both local and international. With your well-known charisma, Pareng Gob, I'm sure our friends from Palos Verdes will soon make their first move.

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SPORTS FEATURES

RP teams flash deadly bats in Asian tourney

By Trina Ibarle

THREE Philippine teams led their respective divisions with unblemished records after yesterday's matches in the Southeast Asian youth baseball-softball tournament at the Alabang Country Club field.

The Manila Smart Eagles showed the way in the senior boys' division with a 2-0 record, the same card of the Manila Outback Marlins in the under-19 girls' category.

They were even outshone by the

ATC Mariners, who paced the under-12 boys' division with three straight victories. The only disappointment for the hosts was the under-14 boys team which has yet to win in two games.

The Eagles, starring Andres Borromeo and Migui Concuerra, opened up with a 7-4 triumph over Singapore Wednesday and then crushed Jakarta, 6-3, yesterday. The Marlins dumped Jakarta, 14-1, then brought down defending champion Singapore, 8-1.

In between a tough 2-0 win over Singapore, the ATC Mariners posted lopsided triumphs, walloping Perth, 18-2, and routing Jakarta, 21-2. Chris Arcilla and Adrian Bernardo led the Mariners against the Aussies.

The country's under-14 squad went down to Singapore, 8-11, then dropped a 4-5 heartbreaker to Jakarta.

Former President Fidel V. Ramos and Philippine Sports Commission chairman Eric Buhain were special guests during the opening ceremony Wednesday.

NSAs still to tap Cebu for SEAG

By Marc Anthony Reyes

IS CEBU City in or out of the Southeast Asian Games picture?

The SEAG organizing committee yesterday came up with venues in Metro Manila, Subic and Bacolod for specific events to be played in the 2005 edition here, but had none for Cebu City.

The Philsocc didn't offer any reason, but sources said Cebu City has yet to get the nod of the national sports associations for judo, chess, mountain bike events, table tennis, dancesports, muay thai, pencak silat and sepak takraw.

The NSAs have been given the final say in selecting the venues where they can exploit home-court advantage and boost the country's campaign for overall honors.

But Cebu City sports commission chair Jonathan Guardo said there's no need to worry because they still have time to convince the NSA heads.

"I have been talking to several NSAs and so far

they have been giving positive considerations for our bid," said Guardo.

He added that Cebu City has already put in place resolutions vowing to ensure the city's hosting of what could be the biggest sports event to be held there.

"Our preparations, including the council resolution, were prepared as early as 2002, and we are confident that the NSAs will realize how much effort we have put in to become a regional hub of the Games," Guardo said.

But while Cebu's bid remained unclear, hosting prospects were bright for Subic and Bacolod.

Bacolod, which is asking to host at least seven sports, has been chosen by the Philsocc to stage five—water polo, football, volleyball, boxing and weightlifting—if it gets into the final roster of events. However, the Abap has yet to decide on where to hold boxing.

Assigned to Subic are sailing, triathlon, the road races in cycling and tennis, which is on the same boat like weightlifting.

SAMSUNG TOUR

Cebu's Neri foils Pagunsan double-kill bid

CEBUANO Jovi Neri foiled Juvic Pagunsan's bid for a double victory when he emerged overall champion of the Samsung Putting Challenge at the Mt. Malarayat Golf and Country Club in Lipa, Batangas.

Neri made it as the fifth qualifier in the eliminations topped by Pagunsan but made just 15 putts in his final 9 holes to crown himself the overall winner of the event held at the course's practice greens.

Pagunsan lost by just one stroke with his final nine of 16 and settled for the men's division plum. He, however, dominated the field in the Samsung Amateur Tour with rounds of 73-67 to beat Jay Bayron and Mark Lopez by six strokes.

The other winners were Carmellette Villaroman for ladies and Sergio Lim for seniors both with 41 putts and Marlon Hager for the junior division with 43.

The Samsung Putting Challenge had Mario's Restaurant, Wilson, Gatorade, Tokyo Tokyo, Microtel,

Custom Clubmakers, Rogin-E and Dunlop Golf as sponsors with Radio stations Killer Bee, Jam 88.3, Wave 89.1, Magic 89.9, 99.5 RT and 103.5 K-Lite as official media partners.

Joining Pagunsan and Villaroman as champions in the showdown of leg winners in the Amateur Tour were Jan Miñoza, Marco Olives, Carlitos Magno and Tess Staub.

Miñoza, nephew of local star Frankie, nipped Zaldy Villa in a sudden-death playoff after both finished with similar 158 aggregates to win Class A; Olives beat Bob Patterson by two for Class B with an 84-84-168 while Magno's 86-89-175 won him the Class C plum by one over Jojo Lee.

Staub prevailed in ladies Class B with her 82-85-167, beating Imee Garcia by two.

Samsung bossman Sang Youl Eom has already asked the organizing Professional Sports Management Group headed by Boy Blue Ocampo to prepare the 2004-2005 Tour starting late in May.



The big splash

A pair of treacherous rivers makes RP a hot world-class venue for white water rafting

RUPERT Domingo leads the crew in attacking a foamy, high-speed section of Mambuya Rapids.

CDO PHOTO

By Maria Congee S. Gomez
Contributor

CONQUERING the treacherous, wild waves is a ceaseless thrill.

Only white water rafting provides such an experience, and the country boasts of two world-class venues for the challenging sport—the Cagayan de Oro (CDO) river in Northern Mindanao and the Chico river in the Cordillera Autonomous Region.

Adventure and Expeditions Philippines Inc. (AEPI) founders Val and Didi Camara and Anton Carag will tell you the rafting course of Chico river is often compared to Bio-Bio in Futaleufu in Chile, Apurimac in Peru and Ciruh in Turkey.

"We had only a modicum knowledge of the sport when we were starting. We had no proper safety equipment. Our only excuse to go white water rafting was our being members of the Northern Mindanao Mountaineers Society," said Rupert Domingo, an officer, along with Randy Corrales, Chisum Sabulase will hit the ceremonial drives at 6:30 a.m. to officially launch the one-day event. Trinidad said Pasay City's street children, drug rehabilitation and campaign against drugs and indigent fire victims will be the beneficiaries of the fund-raising event. "I would like to thank all our sponsors for making our tournament possible," he said. The principal sponsors are Petron, San Miguel Corp., Pagcor and Columbia Airfreight Complex Inc., with Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office, SM, Philtranco, Federal Express and Samsung Electronics as the major sponsors.

The group rode then a "baby" raft bought from the Duty Free Shop and borrowed pairs of wooden paddle from fishermen. They now require members to pay a membership fee of



"HIGH-FIVE" after the successful crossing

HARVEY TAPAN

P1,500, but Domingo continues to borrow helmets and some hand-me-down life jackets from his cohorts in the construction business.

Organizing the WWRA was not an easy task, Domingo pointed out. Several problems hit them hard, including the death of a member who died while solo rafting. But the group plodded on. The WWRA even hosted the First National White Water Rafting Competition in October 2003.

Paddle talk

Every white water rafting ride starts with a mini-clinic.

The life jackets are checked, the riders are required to use a helmet and, if possible, wear cot-

ton shirts to prevent heat stroke. The paddle talk also forms part of the mini-clinic as the riders are taught the proper way of paddling. "No one runs the river course without paddling his way," joked Carag.

In Cagayan de Oro, Factura's paddle talk to hurdle the 12.23-km beginner's course from Mambuya to Kabula ranged from "heavy paddle," "right paddle," "left paddle" to "easy." The city has 14 rapids classified from one to three in level of difficulty. The advance course, from Uguianan to Kabula, has rapids of classes two to four. "Jump-off" or "put-in" was a term used to refer to the starting point.

In the 25-km Chico river, the

jump-off point was Barangay Dupag, where the two rivers—Chico and Pasil—meet. Carag's paddle talk was simple. The only thing he wanted was for us to intently listen to his instructions so that our paddling would be coordinated.

But to run a safety course, the basic equipment such as the kayaks, rubber rafts, paddles, helmets and life jackets should be accounted for. The country has extremely few outfitters, which is why white water rafting has a few following. Outfitters are important because they shoulder the expenses of running the courses. And Carag said white water rafting is a capital-intensive water sport.

Presence of mind

Due to the unpredictability of the rapids, riders often hit the panic button in unexpected situations.

We were constantly advised to have presence of mind. Didi said losing one's composure when the raft flips can affect all the other riders.

"The riders should not take the trip personally and feel that the universe wants them to experience a terrifying ride. And for each successful ride, team effort is very important. This means a lot of motivation, support and encouragement to keep people in the boat," Carag said.

Openiano, Zoleta big winners in Philta tilt

FOURTH seed Rommel Openiano stunned top seed Daniel Luis Macalino, 7-6 (4), 4-6, 6-2, yesterday to cop the boys' 16-under crown in the Philta Classic 3 age-group tournament at the Rizal Memorial Tennis Center.

Fourth seed Russell Arcilla secured the boys' 18-under title with a 6-4, 7-6 (7-5) victory over No. 3 Leyan Moncera, while third seed Mark Balce rallied past fourth seed Jose Lorenzo Oplencia, 6-3, 1-6, 6-2, to rule the 14-under bracket.

Top seed Kim Ivor Saraza nailed the boys' 12-under title over No. 2 Kyle Cordero, 6-0, 6-0, while Pocholo Macalino won the unisex 10-under title over Tim Polero, 7-6 (8), 6-1.

In the girls' division, Bambi Zoleta won the 18-under championship over Melissa Orteza, 6-4, 1-6, 6-3, and then annexed the 16-under crown with a 6-0, 6-2 victory over Julie Em Botor. Zhane Quitara beat Clarice Patrimonio, 6-1, 6-1, for the 12-under title.

Pacquiao, foe . . . From page A25

champ, but I am a champ too! This is a big important fight and I have to win if I want to fight Erik Morales on July 31st."

Visibly irked by Pacquiao's subtle disregard of his abilities, Marquez retorted: "What's he thinking...that I'm going to roll over? Pacquiao just gave me all the motivation I need. Wait until you see me in training camp."

After the presscon, Pacquiao immediately buckled down to work at the Wild Card Gym by

hitting the mitts for a good eight rounds and doing other exercises.

Pacquiao is slated to start his rigid sparring sessions soon against Mexican Israel Vazquez, Armenian superbantamweight Karen Harutyunyan, Irish featherweight sensation Bernard Dunne and two other Mexican fighters who will be brought in to simulate Marquez's fighting style.

Salven L. Lagumbay, Contributor



TRIATHLON SPECIAL

Solar Entertainment EVP Peter Chan Liong (seated at right) and Triathlon Association of the Philippines president Tom Carrasco shake hands on a deal making Solar Sports and RPN-9 the co-producers of a two-hour special on the Speedo Asian Triathlon Championship 2004 slated for April 3 and 4 at the Subic Bay Freeport. With them are (from left) ATC organizing committee executive director Red Dumuk, Solar Television Entertainment VP Coney Lao, Sales Sports VP Nitoy Nocos and RPN-9 assistant general manager Cencio dela Cruz.

Mayor's Cup at VGC today

THE FIRST Mayor's Golf Cup classic, a tournament held to raise funds for Pasay City's needy residents, will be played today at the Villamor Golf Club. Pasay City Mayor Wenceslao "Peewee" Trinidad, Jun Amante and Maj. Gen. Charlie Tafega of the organizing committee and VGC general manager Roberto Sabulase will hit the ceremonial drives at 6:30 a.m. to officially launch the one-day event. Trinidad said Pasay City's street children, drug rehabilitation and campaign against drugs and indigent fire victims will be the beneficiaries of the fund-raising event. "I would like to thank all our sponsors for making our tournament possible," he said. The principal sponsors are Petron, San Miguel Corp., Pagcor and Columbia Airfreight Complex Inc., with Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office, SM, Philtranco, Federal Express and Samsung Electronics as the major sponsors.

Valley tourney presenters

THE PHILIPPINE Golf Development & Equipment Inc. is the major presenter and TaylorMade adidas and Makati Skyline are the tournament presenters

SPORTSWATCH

of the fifth Don Celso Tuason & Valley Founders Memorial Cup. Tournament committee chair Francisco "Popoy" del Rosario and Valley Golf and Country Club president Manuel Quilgo said valuable prizes in kind are up for grabs in the tournament set April 22-25 in honor of Tuason, Valley's first president, and other founders of the club in the foothills of Antipolo City. GM Autoworld Makati, Nissan Commonwealth, Suzuki Philippines and Risk Profiles Insurance are holes-in-one sponsors.

Globe aerobics tomorrow

ILOILO Doctors College plays host to the Globe gentx Invasion all-student sports aerobics marathon from 8 a.m. to 12 noon tomorrow at the school gymnasium. The marathon is open to all able-bodied and physically fit high school and college students, 16 years old and above. Ley Fernandez, Picaf (Philippine International Competitive Aerobics Federation) secretary general, will super-

vised the event and serve as head judge. She will be assisted by national aerobics team coaches and athletes. A high-intensity exhibition number by the RP team of Toots Ensomo, Lenlen Espiritu and Brian Peralta will kick off the competition. The three-stage marathon will consist of low impact aerobics, hip-hop/street dancing and taekwondo/kickboxing. Glass trophies and cash prizes totaling P44,000 will go to the outstanding male and female individual performers and the team trio champions. For inquiries, call 033-3379272 or 0917-2545742.

PSC to discuss SEAG role

THE PHILIPPINE Sports Commission's role in the preparations for the country's hosting of the 23rd Southeast Asian Games next year will be tackled in today's SCOOP Sa Kamayan session at the Kamayan Restaurant on Padre Faura Street in Manila. PSC chair Eric Buhain will discuss his agency's plans in the Games. Also appearing in today's session, sponsored by the Triple V Group of Companies and Photokina Marketing, is Samboy Lim who will talk about his coming First Skywalker's Basketball Camp at the Global City in Fort Bonifacio. The session starts at 11 a.m.

Team emphasis stays in 2004 Tour Pilipinas

EMPHASIS will be on team effort again in the 2004 Tour Pilipinas as P1 million in cash has been reserved for the champion squad in the multistage cycling summer sports spectacle that hits the road from April 15 to May 2.

The juicy prize for the team champion is part of the P4.751 million put up by the organizing Tour Pilipinas Inc. chaired by Bert Lina.

"Again, we have set the champion's team prize at P1 million because of our belief that team effort should be given emphasis in the Tour," said Lina, whose Air21 is principally bankrolling the Tour.

Twelve teams of seven cyclists each are competing in the Tour that will kick off in Sorsogon, Sorsogon. The cyclists pierce much of Luzon, making three Cagayan Valley stops in the 2,758.69-km schedule.

The dreaded Baguio-to-Baguio stage, considered the maker of Tour champions in the past, is back as the centerpiece of the 17-stage, 21-day Tour. A Killer Lap prize of P25,000 will be given to the rider who rules

the daunting 199.7-km stage slated for April 30.

Runner-up in the team competition, where the total prize amounts to P3.7 million, gets P500,000. The third to 12th prizes are P350,000, P300,000, P275,000, P250,000, P225,000, P200,000, P180,000, P160,000, P140,000 and P120,000.

The individual champion gets P200,000, the second-placer P150,000 and third P100,000. A stage winner bags P10,000, while the squad that rules the Laoag-Vigan team time trial in the 13th stage on April 28 gets P20,000.

Other individual awards are the King of the Mountain and the Sprint King, worth P50,000 each, and the Rookie of the Year, where 17 greenhorns will be fighting it out for P50,000 cash prize.

Amel Quirimit will be back to defend his individual overall crown but he is expected to meet stiff opposition from former champions, including Victor Espiritu, who is finally seeing action in the revival era of the Tour.



BEST OF THE UAAP

President Emmanuel T. Fernandez (left) and athletics director Jose A. Capistrano Jr. (right) of 66th UAAP hosts Ateneo flank the season's Athletes of the Year—badminton's Lloyd Escosca of Far Eastern University and women's football's Marielle Benitez of La Salle (varsity level) and chess's Jed Angelo Magat of National University and swimming's Lea Caoline Langit of the University of Santo Tomas (high school division)—during the league's awards night Tuesday at Ateneo's Henry Lee Irwin Theater.

Giant-killer Pasay in vital match

Standings after 5 rounds:

13 points—Guangzhou (CHI), Pasay, Pavlodar (KAZ); 12.5—Tagaytay, Tehran (IRA), Samarinda (INA); 11.5—Jakarta (INA), Mandaluyong; 10.5—Doha (UAE), Sanaa (YEM); 10—Sydney (AUS), Kuala Lumpur (MAL), Terauan; 9.0—Ho Chi Minh (VIE); 8.5—Doha (QAT); 8.0—Kanchipuram (IND); 5.0—Bandar Seri Begawan (BRU); 4.5—Hong Kong, Macau.

Pairings for Round 6: Pavlodar vs. Pasay, Samarinda vs. Guangzhou, Tehran vs. Tagaytay, Jakarta vs. Dubai, Sanaa vs. Mandaluyong, Sydney vs. Kuala Lumpur, Terauan vs. Ho Chi Minh, Doha vs. Macau, Hong Kong vs. Bandar Seri Begawan, Kanchipuram—bye.

TAGAYTAY CITY—Giant-killer Pasay City was seeking to claim another scalp when it faced defending champion Pavlodar of Kazakhstan in the sixth round late last night at the resumption of hostilities in the 14th Asian Cities at the Tagaytay International Convention Center here.

The Pasay woodpushers entered the match against the Kazakh buoyed by their sensational 3-1 upset of top-seeded Guangzhou in the fifth round on Tuesday.

Pasay, Guangzhou and Pavlodar were tied in first place with 13 points each in the nine-round Swiss system event organized

by the National Chess Federation of the Philippines and the Tagaytay City government.

In a three-way tie for fourth, just half a point behind, were host Tagaytay, Tehran and Samarinda of Indonesia.

"The team's morale is high. We have

nothing to lose, said FIDE Master Emmanuel Senador, Pasay's board 1 player. "Ganado kaming lahat dahil natalo namin ang Guangzhou, na pinakamalakas na team dito (We're all in high spirits because we beat the No. 1 team)."

Added the 2002 La Union tournament champion, who celebrated his 44th birthday yesterday: "After Guangzhou, the team is not afraid of Pavlodar anymore."

The defending champions were certainly not taking Pasay lightly. They gave up the opportunity to see the sights of Manila on their off day Wednesday to prepare for their underdog rivals.

"This is an important match for us," said GM Pavel Kotsur, Pavlodar's board 1 player, who stayed with the rest of the team at the Character Convention Hotel here to ana-

lyze games.

Kotsur singled out the names of IM Barlo Nadera and unrated Oliver Makiling on the Pavlodar-Pasay pairings, saying the two Filipinos were the "darkhorses" in the matchup.

Board 2 player Nadera and board 3's Dimakiling scored the big wins over their highly fancied Chinese rivals in the team's upset triumph in the fifth round.

Told that his board 1 opponent was celebrating his birthday, Pavel quipped: "Maybe I give him a present. Yes?"

Senador said his main strategy against the top-rated Kazakh, who now has the highest Elo rating in the tournament at 2569, was "to complicate the game since Kotsur will have the white pieces, and positional play has always been his strength."

Tagaytay team captain Chris Mangaluban believed they still have the best chance to win the Dubai Cup. Except for Pavlodar, the hosts have faced all the other strong teams in the tournament.

Tagaytay, bannered by GMs Eugene Torre, Joey Antonio, Bong Villamayor, Asian Zonal champ Ronald Dableo and IM Jayson Gonzales, were pitted against Tehran in yesterday's sixth round.

"If we score a 4-0 sweep, the championship is ours," Mangaluban said.

The tournament is supported by the Department of Interior and Local Government, Department of Tourism, League of Cities of the Philippines, Philippine Sports Commission, Manila Sports Council, Active Chess Center of Asia, Character Convention and Tagaytay Haven hotels.

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BEST RECORD

Pacers tame Mavericks

NEW YORK—Ron Artest was one of six Indiana players in double figures, guiding the Pacers to a 103-99 victory over the Dallas Mavericks Wednesday.

The Pacers, who were without All-Star forward Jermaine O'Neal, continue to boast the NBA's best record (52-19). Indiana is now 28-7 at home.

Artest poured in 20 points for the hosts, who sported their old, ABA-style jerseys. He also added eight rebounds and dished out five assists.

Al Harrington chipped in with 17 points while Austin Croshere and Reggie Miller picked up 16 apiece.

Miller, playing in his 1,313th game for Indiana, made a three-pointer in the closing seconds to all but seal the win, the crowd chanting "Reggie, Reggie" in appreciation.

"He (Miller) gives us a chance to win," Artest told reporters. "We always know

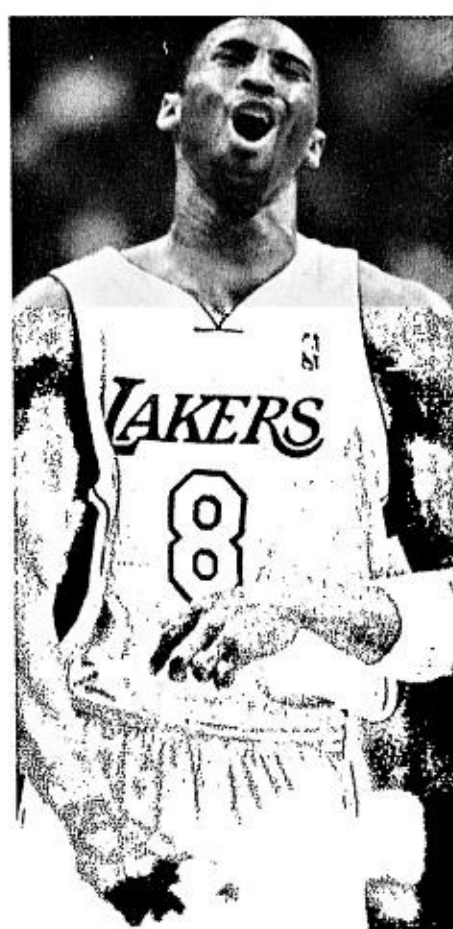
we've got a chance with him." Jeff Foster had 12 points and Jamaal Tinsley 10 for the Pacers.

Dirk Nowitzki led the Mavs with 22 points and Antoine Walker added 15 points and 11 rebounds. Playmaker Steve Nash chalked up 13 points and 14 assists.

In Los Angeles, Kobe Bryant contributed 36 points despite spending most of the day in a Colorado court as the Lakers won their sixth consecutive game, cruising past the Sacramento Kings 115-91.

Bryant, who is facing sexual assault charges, arrived less than an hour before tip-off. He told reporters: "I'm always ready to play." Peja Stojakovic topped the Kings with 20 points.

Complete results: Miami 105, Orlando 90; Philadelphia 99, Phoenix 94; Memphis 111, New York 97; Indiana 103, Dallas 99; Houston 90, Toronto 89 (ot); Denver 101, Minnesota 92; Portland 91, LA Clippers 85; Seattle 84, Utah 77; Golden State 98, Milwaukee 89; LA Lakers 115, Sacramento 91.



BRYANT reacts to a call during the game against the Kings.

Bryant faces rape accuser

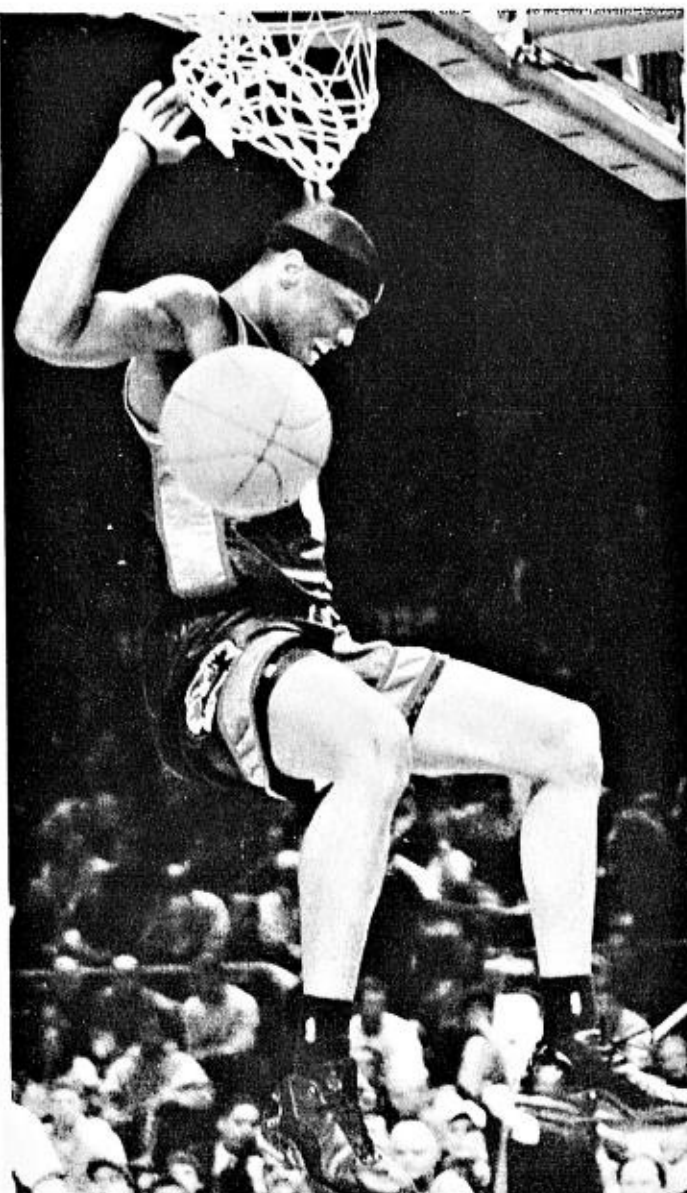
EAGLE, Colorado—Kobe Bryant's accuser testified about her sex life for more than three hours during a hearing that will determine whether any of the information can be introduced at the NBA star's rape trial.

Wednesday's hearing, closed to reporters and the public, marked the first time the 19-year-old woman has faced Bryant since their encounter last summer. In the small court-

room, the witness box is located just a few feet from the defendant's table.

Experts said she was questioned about the most intimate details of her sexual history.

"The hard questions will make her quite sober as to what she's got to face and maybe put it in her mind what will happen at trial," said Robert Pugsley, a professor at Southwestern University School of Law.



GRIZZLIES' Stromile Swift dunks against the Knicks. The Grizzlies won, 111-97.

RP-Burlington Youth players cut to final 18

DOWN to 18 players, the final roster of the RP-Burlington Youth Team would be known by the end of the month.

And, chances are, many of them would likely be Tuldias Taas products, San Beda stalwarts or holdovers from the ill-fated 2002 Philippine 18-and-under squad.

Prime examples are Jerby Cruz, a 6-foot-5 center from UST, 6-1 Daryl Bautista of Adamson and 6-3 Dilan Ababou of Sienna College.

Discoveries from the Burlington-sponsored search for young tall cagers last year, they are expected to make the grade for the team tasked to regain supremacy in the South East Asia Junior Basketball Championship slated April 14-19 at the Quezon Convention Center in Lucena City.

Others considered as shoo-ins are 6-3 Jay-R Taganas, 6-3 Rogemar Menor, 5-11 Eduardo Canlas and 5-9 James Martinez of the unbeaten Red Cubs, the reigning NCAA and National Inter-Secondary titlists.

Kevin Astorga, a 6-3 find from International School, and 6-5 Mike Baldos of Ateneo are back to provide the experience they gained as members of the RP-Burlington Youth Team that landed fourth in the Kuala Lumpur edition two years ago.

Also aching for revenge are head coach Johnny Tam and assistant coach Ching Marcelino, who've decided to bare the official lineup only on March 30 as the rest of the survivors are equally capable.

Still in the hunt for slots are 6-3 Jayson Nocom of De Ocampo Memorial College, 5-9 Mike Sy of Xavier, 6-3 Mark Eubank and 6-4 Angelo Carlas of UST, 5-8 Junie Navarro of AMA, 6-0 Alvin Calatayud of PCCR, 5-10 Jayson Castro of PCU, 6-3 Edgar Tanuan Jr. of Benedictine Abbey, and 5-11 Arvey Aquino of PCCR.

Burlington GM Ruddy Tan, of course, would like to see the Philippines regain supremacy in the tournament serving as a qualifier for the Asian Basketball Confederation Junior Championship.

Toward this end, Tan has arranged a one-week stay in Baguio City for the 12 regular players and three alternates who'll be chosen from the last 18.

"I want the players and the coaching staff to really bond together. They should be physically and mentally prepared to do battle for flag and country," said Tan, also the Nationals' team manager.

Meanwhile, the RP-Burlington Youth Team candidates will be at the SM Southmall Sunday afternoon as guests of the Sporthouse Basketball Fiesta. The mall tour is also part of the outreach program of Burlington, official socks of the PBA.



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ning Prize 4. Conglomerate 5. Sand Splash
Race 5--1. Party Goer 2. That's My Tiger 3. Mr. Lu-
cas 4. Desert Deb
Race 6--1. Thundering Dunk 2. Uncle Buck 3. Jazz
in Time
Race 7--1. Simple Doding 2. Musika 3. Dulce My
Love 4. Taste of Magic 5. Order of Merit
Race 8--1. Semper Spirit 2. Hand in Hand 3.
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2 Olympic medalists lose in Asian boxing qualifying tourney

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ACCEL
PRESENTS

GUANGZHOU, China —North Korea's Kim Song Guk outpointed 1996 Atlanta Olympics champion Somluck Kumsing of Thailand, 21-13, in the featherweight final of the Asian boxing Olympic qualifying tournament on Wednesday.

Despite the upset, Somluck already had a ticket to Athens as all finalists in the nine divisions from light flyweight (48 kg) to light heavyweight (81 kg) qualified.

But only the winners of the heavyweight (91 kg) and super-heavy (91-plus kg) finals would advance, and there was another surprise.

Kazakhstan's Storzhyk Pavel, the Sydney Olympics bronze medalist, lost the heavyweight final to Alborov Igor of Uzbekistan, 33-17. AP

Slasher Cup on

THE "SLASHER Cup ng Masa 6-Cock Derby" starts at 5 p.m. today with more than 75 matches on tap at the Roligon Mega Cockpit.

A total of 107 entries have registered so far in this four-day cockfest being hosted by tabloid executive Rey Briones with full support from Roligon owner Rolly Ligon.

At stake is a guaranteed prize of P1.5 million for an entry fee of P8,800.

The third round of eliminations is scheduled on Monday and participants are advised to submit entries on Sunday from 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.

For inquiries, contact 833-2275, 833-1638, 852-9774 and 852-9812 (look for Aubrey, Shirley or Tiling).

4-cocker in Pasay

CAVITE, Batangas and Metro Manila cockers are gunning for the championship of another 4-cock derby tonight at the air-conditioned Pasay City Cockpit.

Derby sponsors are Sagupaan Hammer, Sagupaan Mite Free, Sagupaan B-50 Forten and Sagupaan Complexor 3000.

The derby stakes P300,000 in prize for an entry fee of P10,000, according to sportsman Gene Avendano of Cavite, who is well-known via his entry Scarynouché.

Participants are advised to submit entries from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m. today and may contact 843-1746, 843-1890 and 816-6750 for details.

Liao, 81

MARTA Liao, mother of sports columnist Henry Liao, died yesterday following a lingering illness. She was 81. Her body lies in state at Arlington Chapel along Araneta Avenue, Quezon City. Ms Liao is survived by children Eddy, Lily, William, Jimmy, Victoria, Mercedes, Nanoy and Henry. Date of interment will be announced later.

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Andy Roddick - USA
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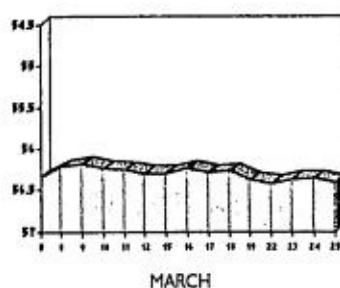
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STOCK MARKET

Stocks end higher

STOCKS, led by second-ranked mobile phone provider Globe Telecom, closed higher yesterday as bargain hunters bought back select issues after their steep fall on Wednesday.

"There was some bargain hunting but investors are still largely cautious because of the political uncertainty ahead of the May 10 elections and global security concerns," Roberto Cano, analyst at BPI Securities, said.

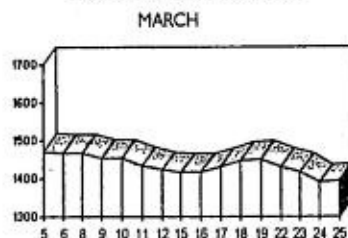
Investors are also closely watching the peso, which is trading near a record low of 56.45 to the dollar.

After falling to a three-month low on Wednesday, the 33-share main index gained 0.23 percent or 3.25 points to 1,393.12 points yesterday. But in the broader market, losers beat gainers 32 to 17 and there were 35 stocks unchanged.

Value turnover fell 23 percent to P676.2 million from P878.37 million.

Reuters

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX



(See stock market report on Page B4)

By Michelle V. Remo

THE NATIONAL government's outstanding debt swelled by 18.57 percent to P3.41 trillion in January this year from only P2.876 trillion during the same month last year, documents from the Bureau of Treasury showed.

This means that each of the estimated 82 million Filipinos now accounts for P41,585 of the country's debt burden, up from P40,914 as of end-2003.

The January debt stock figure excluded the government's contingent obligations, or loans of government-owned or -controlled corporations and government financial institutions which the national government guaranteed.

Contingent debt for January stood at P713.22 billion, which was higher than the P708.5 as of

end-December 2003.

For the whole year, the government has set the country's debt stock ceiling at P4.52 trillion, including contingent liabilities.

The increase in the government's debt stock was brought by higher borrowings both from local and foreign sources. Borrowings from the offshore market, however, grew more rapidly than those sourced locally.

The government earlier issued \$500 million worth of global bonds that will fall due in 2015. The re-

cent bond issuance was part of the government's full-year external borrowing program of \$1.8 billion.

Domestic borrowings, as of end-January amounted P1.74 trillion, or almost 18 percent higher than last year's P1.476 trillion. Foreign borrowings, on the other hand, stood at P1.67 trillion (\$28.816 billion). The figure was 19 percent higher than the P1.399 trillion recorded during the same month in 2003. (The exchange rate used was P56:\$1.)

The government is targeting to limit domestic borrowings for the whole year to P1.924 trillion, and external borrowings to P2.595 trillion.

On a month-on-month basis, the P3.41-trillion debt as of end-January this year was also higher than the P3.36-billion outstanding debt

as of end-December 2003.

The government earlier said that the country's outstanding debt would likely balloon to about P7 billion over the next five years before it could be reduced to a more manageable level. Nearly 90 percent of the country's foreign debt will mature in more than five years, while the rest will mature in a year.

With the government's ballooning debt, which is one of the major factors why credit rating agencies downgraded their assessment of the Philippines, the government's debt servicing is expected to increase this year.

From 9.9 percent of the country's gross domestic product last year, debt servicing for this year is expected to account for 11.6 percent of GDP.

BPI scouting for another major acquisition

By Doris C. Dumlaog

FOUR years after its takeover of Far East Bank and Trust Co. and the local operations of DBS Bank, the Ayala's Bank of the Philippine Islands is thirsting for another major acquisition.

The country's second biggest lender also plans to unload about P2 billion of its P15-billion non-performing assets this year as part of continuing efforts to improve asset quality, BPI president Xavier Loinaz said during the bank's stockholders' meeting yesterday.

At the sidelines of the meeting, Loinaz told reporters that BPI had

gone through a cycle of consolidation and was now ready to grab at available expansion opportunities.

"The last time we did it was four years ago. We're looking around," Loinaz said.

"We are willing but I'm not too sure that there's anything out there. We're always on the lookout," he said.

Joseph Roxas, president of Eagle Equities, said if BPI were to take over another bank, it would have the best synergy with an institution with a strong Filipino-Chinese client base such as Philippine Bank of Communications, Security Banking Corp. or

even Equitable PCI Bank—if the Social Security System's deal with Banco de Oro Universal Bank would not push through.

Jomar Lacson, an analyst with TeamResearch, said if the bank were looking for growth, it would be better to scout for offshore opportunities.

In the past, BPI had considered buying a 20-percent stake in Indonesia's PT Bank NISP but sources said negotiations bogged down because the foreign bank's shareholders were not willing to give the local bank a more active management participation.

"If ever, the good (local) banks

are Security Bank and Union Bank of the Philippines. They have a good size and relatively good asset quality," Lacson said.

Meanwhile, Loinaz explained that the bank was continuing efforts to reduce real and other property owned and acquired (ropoas) except that it had dropped the option of doing so through special purpose vehicles due to pricing issues.

Last year, the bank was able to sell P1.6 billion worth of ropoas on its own. Loinaz said BPI was doing its best to fast-track the sale of more bad assets but not at

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Tama ang timbang
kaya mas marami
ang maluluto

GASUL

PCCI to help beef up security in RP ports

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE PHILIPPINE Chamber of Commerce and Industry yesterday said it was coordinating with government agencies to enable the country's ports and vessels to comply with strict international standards of security.

PCCI executive vice president Donald Dee said in a press briefing that the group was confident the country would be ready by July 1 when new rules under the International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code goes into effect.

"However, the ISPS covers only the ports and the vessels," Dee said. "What is more stringent would be measures that that United States Department of Homeland Security is adopting."

The official was referring to stepped-up security measures on ports that the US was putting up with the goal of gaining intelligence on people, cargo and vessels operating in US waters and ports.

"We (will) bring in X-ray machines to equip our ports and ensure safety and security of cargoes coming in and out of the country," Dee said. "We expect to have the equipment ready within this year."

PCCI president Noemi Saludo reiterated that the government must give priority to the country's readiness to adopt such measures, especially the ISPS Code.

The ISPS Code aims to make standard the international framework for detecting security threats and taking preventive

measures against such threats. The 165 governments, under the Diplomatic Conference Maritime Security, including the Philippines, will implement the rules starting July 1.

She noted that countries that do not comply might see lesser traffic of ISPS-compliant vessels on their ports.

"With a majority of the 165 (signatories) being Philippine trading partners, non-compliance could result to negative effects on imports and exports."

Trade Secretary Cesar V. Purisma earlier said several agencies were working on preparations for the code's implementation including the departments of Trade and Industry and of Transportation and Communication, Maritime Industry Authority, Philippine Ports Authority, Export Development Council, Philippine Shippers Bureau, PCCI, Philexport and Cebu Ports Authority.

Purisma said ports that were not ISPS Code-compliant could face sanctions and shipments from that port may face strict evaluation and refused entry in all international ports, especially US ports.

He added that as of mid-March, 80 percent of ports supervised by the PPA had submitted security plans for evaluation against the ISPS Code.

"In all, I think that by making our sea ports as safe as possible is vital in improving cross-border trading and avert shipping from becoming the target of crime and violence," he said.

By Clarissa S. Batino

PLIPINO Telephone Corp. appears to be on its way to fulfilling its own P400-million net income forecast this year after seven years of incurring billions in pesos in losses due to failed investments.

"Pitell is expected to return to profitability this year, with prospects for its future looking positive," said Manuel Pangilinan, chair of the Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. "I think we are on track with our target of hitting about P400 million in net income this year."

PLDT owns about 45 percent of Pitell, but the dominant carrier's cash-rich subsidiary, Smart Communications Inc., said it planned to acquire the Pitell stake in exchange for absorbing more than

P20 billion of the company's debt.

Pitell started posting losses in 1997 at the height of the Asian crisis. The company failed to maximize its previous wireless technology that did not offer text messaging, forcing it to shift to the same GSM system used by its competitors.

Last year, the company's net loss shrunk to P3.35 billion from P21.83 billion the previous year. Pitell even managed to earn P540 million from operations in 2003.

"Barely five years ago, Pitell was given up for dead," Pangilinan said during the Asia Pacific Bankers Congress yesterday where he was a guest speaker. "It's business was built on the analog platform, which was fast losing market share to GSM. In addition, it had a back-breaking

debt of over P40 billion, and the management of its affairs at the time certainly did not help."

Pangilinan said Pitell had become the third largest cellular phone company in the country, with more than 3 million subscribers.

"We faced several options with Pitell—the easiest being to declare bankruptcy and let the 'chips fall where they may.' But we recognized that declaring bankruptcy would have been disastrous for the banking system."

Pitell had 48,186 landline subscribers as of end-2003. But 83 percent of the company's gross earnings last year came from the wireless phone business that grossed P9,031 billion, up 54 percent from P5.87 billion in 2002.

The company said that operating costs last year dropped by 37

percent to P3.94 billion from P6.24 billion.

Costs went down as the company stopped using assets that no longer earn, such as cell sites for the previous wireless technology called CDMA. Other expenses related to write-offs decreased by P3.81 billion in 2003 from P18.55 billion in 2002.

Marketing expenses of Pitell, however, increased by 16 percent to P1.73 billion from P1.49 billion alongside management fees of P798 million paid to suppliers.

Last year's peso depreciation forced the company to book P1.56 billion in foreign exchange losses from only P1.13 billion in 2002.

In 2001, PLDT and Pitell's creditors agreed to restructure roughly P41 billion of Pitell obligations.

Empowerment in the name of Ka Emma

By Ernesto M. Ordoñez

TOMORROW, March 27 is an important day, not only for the women of San Miguel, Bulacan, but also for the people of the Asia Pacific.

It is the first death anniversary of Emma Sta. Ana. It will also be the inauguration of the Emma Sta. Ana Center for Building Transformative Communities.

Tomorrow is also the 25th year of the Samahan ng Kababaihan Barangay ng San Miguel, Bulacan (KBBASM), which Ka Emma founded.

People look to government, especially this election season, as their main source for their development. Ka Emma's paradigm shift to self-empowered transformative communities is a welcome change our nation needs.

Background

In 1979, the United Nations Development Fund for Women (Unifem) and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) provided technical assistance to the KBBASM as a pilot project in women's economic empowerment.

Under Ka Emma's leadership, the San Miguel women embarked on a unique piggery dispersal. They used participative methods and proven business techniques, such as applying the best technologies, establishing market linkages, and using economies of scale such as constructing their own feed mill.

Throughout this process, the empowerment of all the women was emphasized. Four years later, in 1983, the Unifem gave KBBASM the award for the Best Women's Rural Development Project in Asia.

Other agriculture projects soon followed. Under Ka Emma's leadership, the KBBASM planted one million mango trees in their town—more than the entire province which, at that time, had the most mango trees in the country.

Realizing that even agricultural communities should have industrial activities for balanced agro-industrial growth, they branched into garments and stuffed toys. They soon became the biggest stuffed toy exporter in the country.

In 1989, ten years from the KBBASM's formation, they received the Unifem award for the Best Women's Rural Development Project in the World.

Politics

After 15 years of economic success, KBBASM decided in 1994 that they could achieve even more under a better political system of governance. They noted that the democratic empowerment they practiced was not being implemented by the local government. They also pointed out the very small percentage of women local officials. When Ka Emma asked them to envision more women in politics, they changed their view of politics—from dishonest, insincere, and inefficient to truthful, committed, and effective.

Taking up Ka Emma's challenge, the interested women leaders took the appropriate training in governance offered by the Center for Asia Pacific Women In Politics (Capwip), which is based in the Philippines. Of the women who subsequently ran for elective posts, 70 percent won. The KBBASM had made the successful transition from agriculture to indus-

try to politics.

Throughout this period, the women of San Miguel developed the concept of democratic empowerment into building transformative communities.

Transformative communities

Transformative communities are made up of people who actively collaborate to change their community into a more humane and just society. They work for the enhancement of every member's quality of life through self-reliance, mutual help, solidarity and creativity. They pursue its goals through consensus and are able to engage the existing power structures.

Unfortunately, at the peak of the San Miguel women's success, Ka Emma passed away on March 27 last year.

The women realized that Ka Emma had done her job exceedingly well in making them a living model of a true transformative community, not dependent on any one person.

They then decided to spread this concept and the story of their success to others as their best way of thanking Ka Emma for all she had done for them.

Spreading the word

In July 2003, the San Miguel women leaders organized a "write shop" on building transformative communities. This received technical support from CAPWIP and funding from CIDA. Sixty-eight leaders from the public and private sectors in the Asia Pacific participated.

Three Muslim "write shop" participants later organized a similar activity for 129 leaders of the Bangsamoro Women in December 2003. This was supported by Capwip, the National Commission on the Role of Filipino Wom-

en, the Mindanao Economic Development Council, and the United Nations Development Program. They focused on building transformative communities, especially in conflict-ridden areas.

The foreign "write shop" participants organized their own Asia Pacific conference in Bangkok, Thailand, in November 2003. Ka Tindeng Manuzon, who had never been abroad but who succeeded Ka Emma as KBBASM chair, was one of the most respected and sought-after speakers. This was because of her experience in helping build, and living in, a true transformative community.

Last month, public and government leaders from Cambodia and Bangladesh visited San Miguel, Bulacan, as part of an international training program on governance. They reported that the transformative community learnings they got from their visit was the highlight of their training.

We love you, Ka Emma

Tomorrow, as they inaugurate the Emma Sta. Ana Center for Transformative Communities, the women of San Miguel will not only thank Ka Emma for the 25 years she spent nurturing their own transformative community, they will also have this to say: "We love you, Ka Emma."

For all of us who will benefit from the transformative communities that will soon develop, we can certainly say the same.

(The author is chair of Agriwatch, a private sector initiative; former undersecretary of Agriculture and Trade and Industry and former chair and cabinet secretary for Presidential Flagship Programs and Projects. For inquiries or suggestions, e-mail agriwatch-phil@yahoo.com or telefax 02-8516635.)

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PHILIPINE HEALTH ACCREDITED

DA execs to stop corn imports from flu areas

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE DEPARTMENT of Agriculture may not allow the importation of corn from countries affected by the avian flu, as local feed millers look for other sources of the 350,000 metric tons of corn that they need to acquire in April.

Corn from Thailand, Vietnam, Indonesia, China and the Assam State of India should be excluded from the possible list of countries where local feed millers and hog raisers could acquire their corn imports.

"The latest advisory from the Food and Agriculture Organization show that avian flu is prevalent in said countries (which happen to be) major corn producers," Agriculture Secretary Luis Lorenzo Jr. said in a memorandum. "Import of the corn commodity should also be banned from these countries."

The memo also recommended that corn imports should only be derived from the United States.

Local authorities have been extremely cautious so that the deadly H5N1 virus would not affect the local poultry sector. The Philippines, Malaysia and Brunei Darussalam are the only remaining countries free of the said virus.

The high prices of corn in the international market might discourage importers from participating in the bid for the National Food Authority's tariff-free importation of 350,000 metric tons of corn on April 2, local corn producers said.

According to Roderico R. Bioco, president of the Philippine Maize Federation Inc. (Philmaize), traders would rather purchase local corn, which is traded at P9.50 in Bulacan province, where most feed mills are located. In comparison, landed cost of corn from the US and Argentina is estimated at P12 per kilo.

Wack Wack swings

PLASTICS king William Gatchalian can again come out swinging his golf club in Wack Wack.

The board of the Wack Wack Golf and Country Club, upon the intercession of its president, Comelec Chair Benjamin Abalos, has decided to lift Gatchalian's 2 1/2 -year

suspension after a contentious meeting Wednesday night.

According to the grapevine, Abalos, who had been a constant flight mate of the free-spending tycoon, managed to convince fellow directors Luis Tan, Tom Diokno, and Ernesto Lim to lift the suspension.

The banishment had been meted on Gatchalian for attacking fellow member Gregorio Yu with a golf club in March last year.

If the same grapevine is to be believed, Tonichi Tuason was lone voice in the board against the pardon. Another director, Charlie Go Tua, abstained from the voting.

Two others, Ed Monzon and Frederick Chan, were conveniently and convincingly absent.

Atenean from La Salle

IT LOOKS like Ateneo has forever secured the loyalty of the only taipan that the competing school from Taft has ever produced.

Tomorrow, the Loyola campus will confer an honorary doctorate degree on humanities to John Gokongwei Jr., de-

COCKTALES



Victor C. Agustin

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PRU LIFE UK 71

Current Week
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1.14584

1.0124

Last Week
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1.0115

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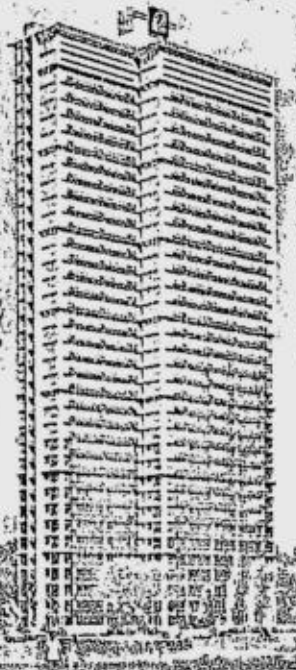
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Ongpin raises stake in Philweb

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

FORMER Trade Secretary and Philweb Corp. chair Roberto Ongpin is jacking up his stake in the publicly listed Internet company.

Two investment holding companies owned by Ongpin—Azurestar Corp. and Aquadisk Corp.—bought 114.37 billion shares or 22.6 percent of Philweb from the Cabarrus family, the original shareholders of mining firm South Share Natural Resources before it was transformed into Philweb.

Sources told the INQUIRER that the acquisition would expand Ongpin's stake in the company to 75 percent.

The shares were bought at 1.1 centavos per share or the average of Philweb's closing prices for the past 30 days.

The Philweb deal accounted for 24 percent of the total transaction in the stock market yesterday.

PhilWeb provides access, business solutions, e-commerce platforms, distribution services for Internet appliances and software and invests in promising Internet start-up ventures. It also invests in Internet startup ventures. Philweb Corp. was tapped as consultant and service provider for two of Philippine Amusement & Gaming Corp.'s Internet gaming projects namely, Internet sports betting and Internet casinos.

Sources said Pagcor would operate 33 Internet casinos in Metro Manila. It has authorized 1000 Internet sports betting stations nationwide, of which 530 are already operating.

Pagcor has launched an Inter-

net sports betting site called BasketballJackpot.Net that offers betting based on the results of basketball games played in the US (National Basketball Association).

Paving the way for its operation of Internet casinos was a Supreme Court ruling early this year which nullified a franchise for online gambling that was given to a private firm by Pagcor six years ago.

In a 10-page decision penned by Associate Justice Consuelo Ynares-Santiago, the high tribunal said Pagcor acted beyond the limits of its authority when it permitted Sports and Games and Entertainment Corp. (SAGE) to operate sports betting and Internet gaming stations.

What Pagcor did, the high

court justices ruled, was to pass on or share with SAGE its exclusive right to operate gambling activities in the country.

The high court said SAGE had to obtain a separate legislative franchise from Congress and not "ride on" Pagcor's franchise.

Former basketball superstar and now Sen. Robert Jaworski had criticized a new government plan to set up Internet gambling operations in partnership with the private sector. Reiterating that Internet gambling would have serious effects on Philippine society, Jaworski said he was opposed to recent plans to set up an online operation where Filipinos can place bets based on the score-keeping of a basketball game played by a popular Philippine professional league.

Bangko Sentral defers plan to borrow \$500M

By Doris C. Dumlaog

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas shelved its \$500-million fund-raising until other public sector borrowers, like National Power Corp., had raised their respective fund requirements.

"We'll call off (the borrowing) for the time being to make sure that others are given priority," BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura said.

He said there were other public sector entities that were more in need of foreign financing, such as Napocor which was scheduled to price a \$200-million bond float yesterday.

Buenaventura said there were other public sector borrowers that were queuing for funds whose requirements were bigger than the BSP's.

But the BSP chief said it was a good time to borrow from the overseas market, noting that spreads over benchmark US treasuries were tightening.

"There's no political noise at the moment," he said.

He said the Monetary Board had approved the planned foreign borrowings of a number of public institutions.

Napocor, for its part, plans to borrow another \$200 million for refinancing. Finance Secretary Juanita Amatong said the national government itself would need to raise some \$800 million, but this could increase if Napocor would not be able to raise its required funds on its own.

He said the BSP had received proposals from various creditors, but the Monetary Board had decided to set them aside temporarily.

"We're not in a hurry," he said, noting the



BUENAVENTURA

BSP would not want to crowd other public sector borrowers out of the market. "But I'm sure there are good proposals."

Buenaventura said the BSP was planning a three-year borrowing to complete refinancing requirements this year, most likely in the form of syndicated foreign currency loan.

"It could be three to five years (in maturity), but we think we don't need five. Three years is good enough but if there is good offer for five years then we'll be willing to pay the extra premium," he said.

He reiterated that there was no rush to complete the fund-raising before the elections. The BSP was really planning to raise the \$500 million in the second half of the year, but it was willing to fast-track its borrowing if opportunities were available.

Cocktales

From page B3

spite the billionaire having been formally educated in De La Salle University (MBA/BS Commerce).

Ateneo had already beaten La Salle in prying P200 million from the famously tightfisted taipan to fund its undergraduate management college. In gratitude, the Jesuit priests decided two years ago to rename its management school the John Gokongwei School of Management.

The conferment of the honorary degree will be the highlight of the college's graduation ceremonies.

Scottish foray

AND speaking of John Gokongwei, the taipan's listed food conglomerate, Universal Robina Corp., has just received a substantial portfolio boost from one of the best boutique fund management company in the region.

The Scottish-managed Arisaig Partners of Singapore disclosed that it had acquired a little over 5 percent of URC shares from the local market.

Named after a picturesque seaside town off the west Highlands coast in Scotland, Arisaig's Asia Fund has already managed to chalk up a 256.3-percent return since its launch five years ago.

Calling on Calpers

THE government is not letting up on its lobbying efforts to stop CalPERS, the California Public Employees' Retirement System, from forsaking the Philippines as an investment destination.

In their latest foray, Ambassador to the United States Albert del Rosario has dis-

patched the embassy's political affairs minister Lourdes Yparraguirre to accompany Assistant Finance Secretary Jeremias Paul and corporate lawyer Francis Lim in their Los Angeles meeting with CalPERS' consultant, Wilshire Consultants.

The meeting, scheduled Thursday (Friday in Manila), is meant to explain Philippine shareholder and creditor issues which Manila claims Wilshire had misunderstood in giving a negative rating to the Philippines.

Heard through the grapevine

BANK Wise, the thrift bank originally started by Indonesian group Dharmala, will shift its focus toward the Muslim Mindanao market, and hopefully become the financial intermediary of choice for OIC development funds bound for the Southern Philippines. (Email: cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or cocktales_pdi@hotmail.com.)

BPI . . .

From page B1

huge discounts.

"If we are able to move our assets at about 90 percent of appraised value, why should we give them away for less?" he said.

During yesterday's meeting, stockholders also paid tribute to Jaime Zobel de Ayala who retired as bank chair. He was succeeded by Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala II.

Philippine Stock Exchange

(As of March 25, 2004)					
STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Asiatrust Dev. Bank Inc.	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	12,000
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	17.25	17.25	16.75	16.75	73,500
Bank of the Phil. Islands	43	45	43	43	446,600
China Banking Corp.	670	670	670	670	3,110
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	775	795	770	775	119,800
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.56	0.56	0.55	0.56	19,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	24.25	24.5	24	24	416,900
Philippine National Bank	23	23.25	23	23.25	9,100
Phil. Savings Bank	27	27	27	27	10,000
Security Bank Corp.	16.75	17	16.75	17	2,900
Union Bank of the Phil.	25	25	25	25	1,800
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Manulife Financial Corp.	1930	1930	1925	1925	180
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1415	1425	1415	1425	90
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp.	19.5	19.5	18	18	88,000
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	0.67	0.67	0.67	0.67	640,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	775	795	770	775	141,700
Manila Bulletin Pub. Corp.	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	13,000
Philippine Tel. Corp.	1.68	1.72	1.64	1.68	14,069,000
Phil. Telegraph & Tel. Co.	0.09	0.105	0.09	0.105	200,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	900	900	895	900	90,180
Philweb Corp.	0.011	0.011	0.011	0.011	4,420,500,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	17	17.5	17	17	92,800
Manila Electric Co. B	26.5	27.5	25.5	26	1,462,500
Petron Corp.	2.65	2.75	2.6	2.65	6,819,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	3	3	3	3	234,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Union Cement Corp.	1.46	1.46	1.46	1.46	810,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.1	3.1	3	3	1,004,000
Cosmos Bottling Corp.	4.05	4.05	4.05	4.05	1,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	28	28	27.5	27.5	46,600
Jollibee Foods Corp.	16.5	16.5	16.5	16.5	2,584,700
RFM Corp.	0.52	0.65	0.52	0.65	20,000
Swift Food Inc.	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	30,000
San Miguel Corp. A	56	56	55.5	56	46,900
San Miguel Corp. B	69.5	69.5	69	69.5	77,600
Universal Robina Corp.	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	1,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	200,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	6.1	6.1	6.1	6.1	8,191,000
Aboliz Equities Ventures	2.9	2.9	2.9	2.9	50,000
ATH Holdings Inc.	1.48	1.5	1.48	1.5	65,000
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	500,000
Bengros Holdings Corp.	0.52	0.52	0.49	0.49	6,650,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	1,400,000
DMDI Holdings Inc.	0.21	0.21	0.21	0.21	50,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.017	0.017	0.017	0.017	100,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	377,000
Forum Pacific Inc.	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	100,000
Ionics Inc.	1.3	1.3	1.26	1.26	52,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	1.78	1.8	1.78	1.78	1,893,000
Medco Holdings	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	30,000
Megaworld Corp.	1	1.02	1	1.02	4,050,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.26	0.26	0.25	0.25	800,000
Roxas Holdings Inc.	0.85	0.85	0.85	0.85	40,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.34	0.34	0.33	0.33	1,000,000
SPI Technologies Inc.	14	14	14	14	19,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.35	0.39	0.35	0.39	5,820,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Matsushita Elec Phil Corp.	8	8	7.8	8	31,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	20,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	200,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	19.25	19.25	17	17	820,400
PLDT (10% Pref) Series V	10.75	10.75	10.75	10.75	4,900
PLDT (10% Pref) Series X	10.75	10.75	10.75	10.75	3,200
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Aa	10.75	10.75	10.75	10.75	3,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Bb	10.75	10.75	10.75	10.75	2,600
PLDT 10% Pref Series Cc	10.75	10.75	10.75	10.75	1,600
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	5.1	5.2	5.1	5.1	5,838,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.12	0.125	0.12	0.125	120,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.205	0.205	0.2	0.2	2,250,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	0.99	1	0.99	1	5,600,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.175	0.175	0.16	0.16	60,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.17	0.17	0.17	0.17	10,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	326,000
SM Development Corp.	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.1	35,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	5.6	5.6	5.6	5.6	3,793,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.003	0.003	0.003	0.003	10,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	12,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. A	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	20,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co. B	0.235	0.24	0.235	0.24	350,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	3,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.0026	0.0026	0.0026	0.0026	10,000,000
Philrex Mining Corp. A	0.37	0.37	0.37	0.37	20,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.009	0.009	0.009	0.009	4,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	33,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	0.0028	100,000,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.13	200,000

DISCLOSURES

ALASKA Milk Corp. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on May 25, 9 a.m. at the Makati Shangri-La Hotel. Stockholders of record as of March 5 are entitled to vote at the meeting.

EURO-MED Laboratories Philippines Inc. will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on May 19, 10 a.m. at the Philippine Columbian Association, Paco, Manila. Stockholders of record as of April 26 are entitled to notice of and vote at the meeting.

ELECTED directors of Ayala Land Inc. are Fernando Zobel de Ayala, Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala II, Francisco Licuanan III, Mercedes Nollado, Delfin Laroza, Jaime Ayala, Leandro Locsin Jr., Ramon del Rosario Jr. and Nieves Confesor.

CHINA Banking Corp. extended the deadline for the nomination of bank directors to April 5.

UNION Bank of the Philippines declared cash dividends of P0.75 centavos per share in favor of stockholders of record as of April 2 and will be payable on April 30.

BELLE Corp. disclosed the resignation of Ramon Ang as director of the company.

PHILIPPINE Seven Corp. will buy Jollimart Philippines Corp.'s 39 Bingham Convenues Stores for P130 million.

SOUTH China Resources Inc. moved its annual stockholders' meeting to May 5 at 2 p.m.

ELECTED directors of Bank of the Philippine Islands were Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala II, Jeanette Kai Yuan Wong, Fernando Zobel de Ayala, Xavier Loinaz, Gerardo Ablaza Jr., Romeo Bernardo, Chng Sok Hui, Octavio Espiritu, Ariston Estrada Jr., Rebecca Fernando, Kankipati Rajan Raju, Aurelio Montinola III, Mercedes Nollado, Oscar Reyes and Ikuo Saito.

SAN Miguel Corp. declared cash dividends of P0.35 per share in favor of stockholders of record as of April 16. It will be payable on May 10. *Compiled by Maricar D. Tolosa, PDI Research*

CURRENCIES

March 25, 2004	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
Country				
United States	Dollar	0.824810	1.000000	56.3670
Japan	Yen	0.007765	0.009414	0.5306
United Kingdom	Pound	1.504619	1.824200	102.8247
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.105802	0.128274	7.2304
Switzerland	Franc	0.645644	0.782779	44.1229
Canada	Dollar	0.614842	0.745434	42.0179
Singapore	Dollar	0.487275	0.590772	33.3000
Australia	Dollar	0.617188	0.748279	42.1782
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.179942	2.652661	149.5225
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.218944	0.266660	15.0308
Brunei	Dollar	0.485840	0.589032	33.2020
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000097	0.000117	0.0066
Thailand	Baht	0.020897	0.025336	1.4281
UAE	Dirham	0.224573	0.272272	15.3472
Euro	Euro	1.000000	1.214000	68.3394
Argentina	Peso	0.286890	0.347826	19.6059
Brazil	Real	0.281601	0.341413	19.24

Petron posted net income of P3.1B in '03

By Abigail L. Ho

OIL REFINER Petron Corp. posted a net income of P3.1 billion in 2003, 6.6 percent higher than the P2.9 billion it recorded the previous year.

Petron said in a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange that its profit growth was driven mainly by strong sales and lower costs.

Gross sales revenue last year reached P110.7 billion, up from the P92.3 billion the year before.

Petron sold 49.8 billion barrels of fuel in 2003, slightly better than 2002's 49.5 billion barrels.

While local oil demand declined by 0.8 percent last year, Petron managed to register a slight 0.1-percent growth in domestic sales, bringing its market share up to 39.3 percent.

Export sales also grew 2.8 percent in 2003 to 8.46 million barrels from the previous year's 8.23 million barrels.

Its operating expenses, on the other hand, went down 5 percent from P3.7 billion in 2002 to P3.5 billion in 2003.

"We see efficiency improvement as one of the key drivers for sustaining our profitability. We have a structured program to make our refinery at par with the best in its class by next year," Petron public affairs manager Virginia Ruivivar said.

She said the company was currently pursuing projects that would give it new revenue streams in the future.

These initiatives included two major refinery projects as well as the expansion of Petron's company-owned, company-operated (Coco) service stations.

The two major refinery projects—the establishment of an isomerization unit and a gasoil hydrotreater, would enable Petron to locally produce Clean Air Act-compliant fuel.

BSP: Peso fall not likely to affect prices

By Doris C. Dumlaog

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas said there was no need to take further monetary action to arrest the peso fall, saying that the recent exchange rate level was not yet worrisome.

Emerging from the weekly meeting of the BSP's policy-making Monetary Board yesterday, BSP Governor Rafael Buenaventura said the local currency was "range-bound."

The peso closed at 56.41 to \$1 yesterday, down from Wednesday's 56.36, with a trade volume of \$72.4 million.

He said that the recent exchange rate level was not likely to put pressure on consumer prices. He said there would

be a significant impact on prices if the peso depreciation against the greenback would be unabated.

A weaker peso makes imports more expensive, and this hampers productivity as most of the country's export-oriented manufacturers rely heavily on imported inputs.

He said the peso's recent depreciation was not driven by speculations but by legitimate corporate requirements.

"We don't see any unusual movement. There are month-end requirements. Remember that we're now moving to the holiday (referring to the Holy Week) season," he said.

Buenaventura also said there was no reason for domestic interest rates to rise

over the short-term.

In fact, he projected that Treasury bill rates would correct downwards during the next auction on Monday.

He said the banks had "overdone" bidding up the rates in the past, testing the national government's need to raise funds.

The national government recently completed a \$500-million bond offering and is likely to tap the foreign market for some more.

The Monetary Board—which holds its policy rate setting on a monthly basis—earlier decided to maintain a neutral stance on its overnight policy rates for the seventh consecutive month in March.

Key policy rates were kept at 6.75 percent for the overnight borrowing or re-

verse repurchase and 9 percent for the overnight lending or repurchase rate.

The BSP's policy rates were last adjusted in July last year with a cut of 25 basis points. Although the rates were kept at the same level since then, there was a virtual tightening in August when the Monetary Board lifted the tiering scheme for banks' placements with the BSP.

As a preemptive response to inflationary threats arising from the peso-dollar volatility, the MB also hiked last February the liquidity reserve requirement on peso deposits and deposit substitutes of banks and non-banks with quasi-banking functions by 2 percentage points.

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UNIONBANK OF THE PHILIPPINES

NOTICE TO ALL STOCKHOLDERS

For All Stockholders:

March 18, 2004

Please be informed that Union Bank of the Philippines ("UnionBank") received on March 15, 2004 the approval of Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas dated March 3, 2004, on the seventy five centavos (P0.75) per share cash dividends declared by UnionBank Board of Directors on January 23, 2004 which is equivalent to a total amount of PESOS: FOUR HUNDRED THIRTEEN MILLION FOUR HUNDRED THIRTY FOUR THOUSAND FOUR HUNDRED SEVENTY THREE (P413, 434,473.00) and payable from the retained earnings of UnionBank as of December 31, 1997.

Accordingly, RECORD DATE for stockholders entitled to the cash dividends shall be on April 2, 2004 while PAYMENT DATE will be on April 30, 2004.

For your information. Thank you.

Very truly yours,

(Sgd.) ATTY. FE B. MACALINO
Corporate Secretary

ALI ups STCPs to P2B

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

AYALA Land Inc. (ALI), the property arm of the diversified Ayala Group of companies, plans to hike its proposed short-term commercial debt float to P2 billion.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange, ALI senior vice-president and chief finance officer Jaime Ysmael said ALI has filed a registration statement with the Securities and Exchange Commission "to renew its P1 billion short-term commercial papers (STCP) at an increased amount of P2 billion."

The STCPs will be issued in tranches over a certain period which has yet to be approved by the SEC.

The STCPs will be priced at "100 percent of face value or at par" and will mature one year from the issue date.

The proposed issue will consist of fixed-rate or floating rate tranches with the interest rates based on prevailing market rates.

Ysmael said the proceeds raised from the STCPs will be used "for general corporate purposes such as, but not limited to, loan refinancing, operating expenses and purchase of inventories."

The debt papers have been assigned a credit rating of PRS1 by the Philippine Rating Services Corp., which reflects a strong capability for timely payment.

PhilRatings also maintained the PRS Aaa ratings on ALI's outstanding P3 billion bonds due on 2007 and P2 billion bonds that will mature in 2008.

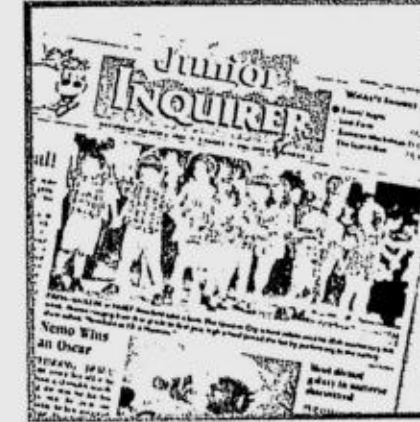
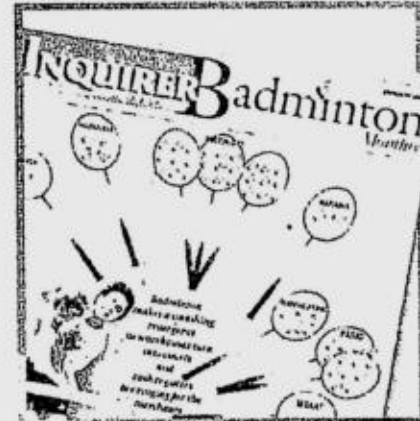
Ysmael also said that ALI has maturing debt of P2 billion which it will either refinance or pay down, depending on the property firm's cash flow.

30th Anniversary Fund Campaign
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in cooperation with the
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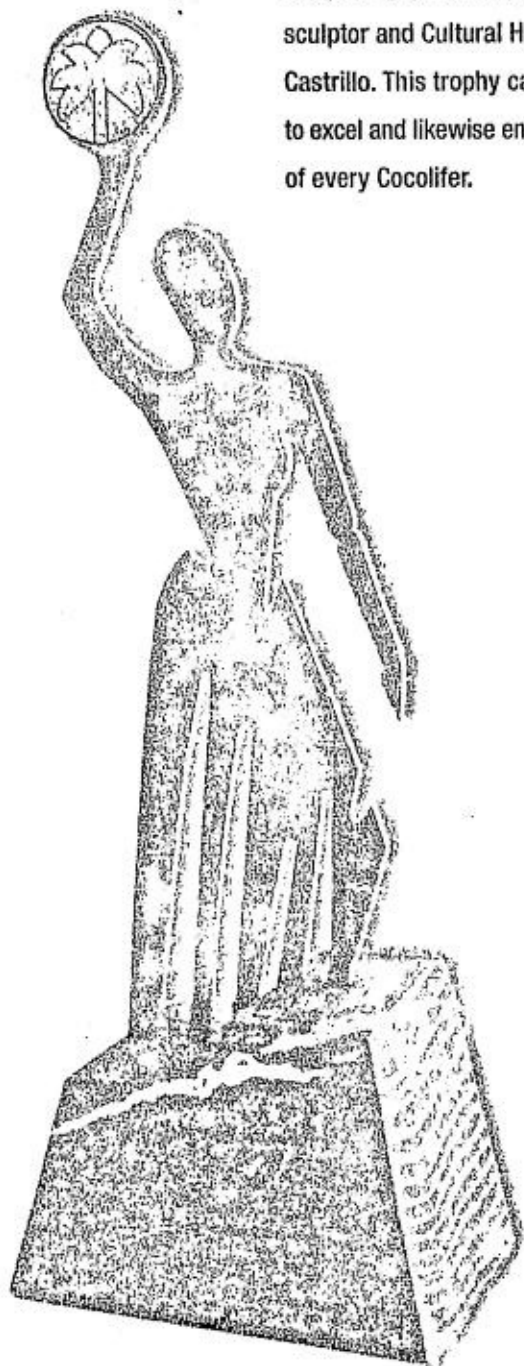
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COCOLIFE

2003

NATIONAL SALES AWARDS



TOP SALES PERFORMERS



CHAIRMAN'S CIRCLE OF HONOR

D I A M O N D



P L A T I N U M

TOP SALES PERFORMERS

UNDERWRITER OF THE YEAR

Barbara S. Reyes

UNDERWRITER/PRODUCER OF THE YEAR

Barbara S. Reyes

AGENCY MANAGER OF THE YEAR

Edgar A. Reyes

BRANCH MANAGER OF THE YEAR

Edgar A. Reyes

AREA OF THE YEAR

Northeast Luzon

Edgar A. Reyes

Area Head

BRANCH MANAGERS

Edgar A. Reyes

Edgar A. Reyes

Edgar A. Reyes

Edgar A. Reyes

HALL OF FAME AWARDEES

Edgar A. Reyes

Agency Manager of the Year

(2001-2002-2003)

Edgar A. Reyes

Underwriter of the Year

(2001-2002-2003)

MDRT CANDIDATES

Barbara S. Reyes

Edgar A. Reyes

Edgar A. Reyes

Edgar A. Reyes

Edgar A. Reyes

Edgar A. Reyes

REGIONAL CHAMPIONS

Edgar A. Reyes

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Greater Luzon Region

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REGIONAL CHAMPION AGENCY MANAGERS

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REGIONAL ROOKIE CHAMPIONS

REGIONAL ROOKIE CHAMPION UNDERWRITERS

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REGIONAL CHAMPION BRANCH MANAGERS

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REGIONAL ROOKIE CHAMPIONS

UNDERWRITERS



AGENCY MANAGERS



UNDERWRITERS



REGIONAL CHAMPIONS

BRANCH MANAGERS



HALL OF FAME AWARDEES



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AREA HEAD



BRANCH MANAGERS



BRANCH MANAGERS



PRESIDENT'S CIRCLE OF HONOR

AGENCY MANAGERS



G O L D

PRESIDENT'S CIRCLE OF ACHIEVERS

AGENCY MANAGERS

Florida Castillo
Nenita Cabbuang
Alfonso Luyin
Mrs. Elisa Quevedo
Marithea Bustillos
Purita Gonzora
Ramonito Toledo

BRANCH MANAGERS

Juan Cabbuang
Alberto Castillo
Irene Mendoza

Marino Ardozo
Marilita Quivada

CHAIRMAN'S CIRCLE OF HONOR

PLATINUM

Shirley Mary Castillo
Nenita Cabbuang
Nancy Tandoc
Francisco Ligaya
Juan Cabbuang
Mrs. Elisa Quevedo
Geminiano Bustillos
Nelia Bengate
Milagros Perez
Liza Ramon

DIAMOND

Daniel Soriano
Mark Remy Gonzora
Urchin Gary
Uyarn April Aquino
Terrell Savill
Norma Soriano
Ricellano Capito
Noemi Catul
Saida Conch
Marlene Chua
Donna Pangan

GOLD

Eduardo Banaag
Marcelino Banaag

Alvin Banaag
Linda Ann Sandoz
Nancy Gonzora
Guillermo
Volante Gato
Rosa Ylorio
Milagros Plomo
Ruth Nolasco
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BUSINESSFriday

Business Features Editor Margie Quimpo-Espino

FRANCHISE EXCELLENCE AWARDS

Rewarding those who sell their products well

By Tina Arceo-Dumlao

THESE are familiar enough statistics: Only one out of every 10 new businesses will live past two years, while nine out of 10 franchisees will make it.

The odds in favor of investing in a franchised business are more than enough to encourage even first-time businessmen to go out and sign the first contract that catches their fancy.

Unfortunately, many unscrupulous owners of business concepts have duped many unsuspecting investors out of their money. It pays, thus, to only put in hard-earned money in franchise concepts that have stood the test of time and competition.

The Philippine Franchising Association and the Department of Trade and Industry paid tribute to 2003's Outstanding Filipino Franchisees during the recent Franchise Excellence Awards night.

Retail: Bayo

Bayo has today become a byword for clean and classic clothes for the modern Filipino woman.

It is owned by Lyncor Inc., an all-Filipino firm engaged in the retail of women's apparel and accessories. The company put up Bayo to become a testament of what a Filipino firm can do in today's competitive retail environment.

Its goal is to penetrate the

global market and promote it as a Filipino brand.

Bayo is well on its way, having established 30 branches in all key shopping malls nationwide, seven of which are owned by franchisees.

The company aims to continue expanding and tap the international market in the near future.

Kiosk: Potato Corner

Potato Corner introduced flavor French fries to the market. It also pioneered the franchising of business in a cart and has been elevated to the Hall of Fame.

It started in 1992 and investors got back their money in just a month. From there it spread rapidly from Metro Manila to the provinces.

Since 2001, Cinco Holdings, which operates Potato Corner and other brands, continued to post significant growth and has opened the world of entrepreneurship to many through its affordable franchise contracts.

Service: Reyes Haircutters

Reyes Haircutters was established by Les Reyes, brother of known hairstylist Ricky Reyes, to cater to Filipinos looking for quality salon services at affordable prices. It was awarded Most Promising Filipino Franchise of the Year.

To differ from high-end salons, he positioned RHC as the "Fil-



The first and the original flavored French fries



ipino Family Salon"—a salon for every member of the family, and the shift paid dividends.

In 2001, RHC started franchise operations and has rapidly expanded from just four company-owned branches in Metro Manila to more than 100 branches nationwide.

He says that there is also demand abroad, especially in highly populated Filipino communities.

Food: Max's Inc.

Max's rose out of the rubble of World War II when Maximo Gimenez, inspired by the patronage of American occupation troops, opened his Quezon City café that served chicken, steak and drinks.

It was his niece Ruby, who concocted the special recipe for chicken and it built the house that is Max's today.

Over the years, Max's Restaurant's popularity grew and it has

expanded its operations nationwide. It even expanded to California in the US.

Max's opened its franchising doors in 1998 and business partners have remained true to the spirit of the founders. Today, the franchisees help strengthen "the house that fried chicken built."

Service: Solerex (Crystal Clear)

Solerex Water Technologies Inc. is a medium-sized company engaged in the sale, franchising and management of water refilling stations.

It was originally set up in 1986 as an operating division of a hotel interior design company. After four years, it was spun off into a separate company and



MARKS & SPENCER

concentrated on marketing its purification systems and its bottled water brand "Crystal Clear."

In 1997, Solerex ventured into the water refilling station business, enabling it to offer superior equipment to the market at a relatively low cost.

Today, Solerex has a nationwide network of 250 operating stores of which only eight are company owned. It built the third most extensive water station franchise network in just two years.

It is also extending its franchise network overseas with stores operating in Indonesia.

Retail: Marks & Spencer

Marks & Spencer, a very English concept in retail, was intro-

duced to the Philippines 28 years ago by the Rustan's group of companies. It was awarded International Master Franchise of the Year.

It started with a small shop inside Rustan's Department Store, selling ladies' intimate apparel and toiletries.

From there, it increased its presence with the opening of a free standing store that offers a whole range of items that include food and gift items, children's apparel and footwear.

The group behind its success is Rustan Marketing Specialists Inc., which was created in 1997 to handle the operation and expansion of the M&S business in the Philippines.

As the brand's exclusive franchisee in the Philippines, RMSI runs the Marks and Spencer business according to the standards of Marks & Spencer UK, ensuring that its global image and strategies are reflected in all areas of operation.

Organic farm's secret: Mt. Pinatubo pumice stones

By Tonette Orejas
PDI Central Luzon Desk

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO—Disasters bring opportunities.

In the case of Agnes Romero, she put to good use the pumice stones that Mt. Pinatubo spewed out during its most violent eruptions in June 1991.

The stones that litter the Bamban-Sacobia River in Tarlac, just on the northern boundary of Pampanga, help make the herbs and vegetables in the family-owned Romac Greenhouse grow well, she says.

Bamban residents, mostly women, sell to her the stones at P15 per sack.

These very small—just a little bigger than rice grains—and almost weightless pebbles are mixed with organic fertilizers and shredded coconut fibers.

"They're put in so the soil can be loose and the roots will not be suffocated. It is not necessary then to hoe the soil every day," Romero, 49, says.

With the care given by agriculturists from the Pampanga Agriculture College, the plants in Romero's farm at the two-hectare Residencia Romero in Barangay Telabastagan here have thrived.

Romero enjoyed an overproduction in the farm that she began only in December last year to answer her husband Rene's need for fresh salads—his alternative cure to medicines for high blood pressure and high sugar level.

She began selling her produce, mainly seven kinds of lettuce, to friends and friends of friends.

"We really began this for a personal reason. I told Rene I could not be going to the market every day to buy his vegetables because I do my marketing once every two weeks. That's how I became an instant farmer," she recalls, adding she went all the way to the Bulacan State University to learn greenhouse farming.

Her market for organically grown greens expanded fast. Words spread quickly there were organically grown vegetables in her farm. The two greenhouses became four, then six and then 13, including a nursery. Of course, she needed more Pinatubo stones, to the delight of Bamban residents.

The greens still came in abundant volumes, prompting her daughter Gieh and son-in-law Jannsen Limjoco, a culinary graduate, to begin the Herbs and Greens Greenhouse Resto just beside the Romero's home.

Started last month and still on its soft opening phase, the restaurant has enjoyed a following among diners wanting freshly harvested greens in their salads or in main courses.

"We always have to augment the tables and



ROMERO in her lettuce farm

the chairs by more than half the usual capacity. The place is still big anyway but some customers are at times left to settle for seats in the garden," Romero says.

The place, designed ala greenhouse, ticks with the regular patrons. "I like the quality of the food, its promotion of an eating lifestyle for longevity, and the ambience that's unique in Pampanga," says Cesar Ocampo.

The salad dressings are also unique, concocted right in the family kitchen but Geih and Jannsen won't let out their secret yet.

Only Romero is ready to tell the farm's secret: The use of Pinatubo pumice stones.

Pinatubo tomatoes

An off-roading buff, Romero not only discovered the stones during her perilous riding jaunts to Sacobia last year. Giving her four-wheel Jimmy jeep a break from the difficult maneuvers on sand dunes and rocky hills, she caught sight of a bush with two tiny, red and ripe bulbs.

Crunchy and sour, these turned out to be tomatoes. They are just the size of regular buttons. The one seed she has germinated into seven seedlings.

These have multiplied into 400 seedlings, mostly transplanted on soil beds again filled with the right amount of Pinatubo stones.

"Plenty of people have been asking about them but I hardly get a handful from each bush. They're best for salad garnishing. The aesthetics they give, and of course the sourness, are great," she says of her newfound plant.

The tomatoes hardly grow in their natural habitat, what with Pinatubo's still harsh environment for agriculture.

The 117 mangoes in her orchard have also found good company. Under the shades now grow the native pako (edible ferns), nurtured on drip technology.

And how's Rene's health? "I stopped relying on medicines," he says, flashing a wide grin.

For Romero, who is not even an agriculturist and who has been in the manpower services business for three decades, farming has turned out to be a healthy endeavor and a feasible business venture in the post-disaster years.

Even Bro. Eddie can still win with buzz marketing (Person marketing III)

THE COLUMN we wrote last Feb. 27, 2004 on person marketing the presidential candidates ("Research Shows Anyone Among FPJ, GMA and Roco Can Still Win") was one of the most popular, most forwarded and most debated upon columns that we've written.

Since then, we've been deluged with questions, heated remarks, and requests for more information from the "marketing directors" of the different candidates. But one of the most nagging questions we've been getting has been this: "What about Bro. Eddie?"

Personally, we're seeing a growing number of people begin to say that they are seriously thinking of Bro. Eddie as a possible choice. Some have started saying that they have in fact switched their choice to Bro. Eddie after seeing and listening to him on Mareng Winnie's and Ka Oca's Debate TV program or after reading his platform and comparing it with the others.

Seven to get seven

It seems that Bro. Eddie's marketing team, now headed by some ex-P&G brand managers, is beginning to make some headway. Because of sheer lack of a budget, Bro. Eddie's team is using a network marketing cum buzz marketing strategy of getting each pro-Bro. Eddie voter to recruit seven converts and each of these in turn recruiting another seven.

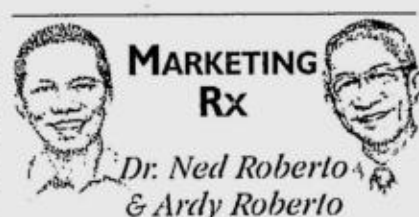
No show in surveys

But the nagging question that we get from Bro. Eddie's sympathizers is: despite the huge crowds that Bro. Eddie's rallies are getting and despite the seeming effectiveness of their buzz marketing campaign, why do last month's SWS and Pulse Asia voter surveys show Bro. Eddie's share of votes still at a minuscule 1.8 percent. So is buzz marketing only good in theory but not in practice?

This is a good marketing case to diagnose because we have some basic data and statistics. Let's start with the statistics on share of votes (SOVs).

In the latest SWS survey conducted Feb. 17-25, 2004 and released March 3, we saw Bro. Eddie garnering 1.8 percent SOVs. GMA led the race with 31.8 percent SOVs which is almost 18 times that of Bro. Eddie's.

In actual number of voters, Bro. Eddie's 1.8 percent SOVs translate to 682,203 voters [or (1.8 percent SOVs) x (37,900,176 total registered voters)]. GMA's 31.7 percent SOVs is



therefore equivalent to 12.05 million voters.

As a purely arithmetical exercise of multiplication, Bro. Eddie's 7-7 strategy should exceed GMA's SOVs. When Bro. Eddie's 682,203 voters each succeeded in recruiting seven pro-Bro. Eddie voters, Bro. Eddie's SOVs multiply to 4.77 million or 12.6 percent SOVs. This SOVs already exceed Lacson's 11.4 percent SOVs. Carry the multiplication to the next and second 7-multiplier and we obtain 33.4 million voters for Bro. Eddie or an incredible 88 percent SOVs!

Pito-pito: good for tea only?

It should immediately be clear that the 7-7 strategy should not be interpreted in this manner. Its correct interpretation and (more importantly) correct implementation must take account the realities of voter segmentation and behavior. We identified and explained the more critical of these realities in our Feb. 27 column on Person Marketing: "Research Shows Anyone Among FPJ, GMA and Roco Can Still Win."

For GMA, for example, the first significant voter segmentation we identified was her "disciple" "puhunan" voter segment. These are the voters who will champion her candidacy and convert others to vote for her. We measured this segment's size as equal to GMA's steady SOV ratio of 15-17 percent. Second is the "negative/hostile" voter segment. These are the "disciple" "puhunan" voters of the other candidates. Being such disciples, they won't switch to GMA and no amount of time spent persuading them will change their attitude toward GMA. We measured this segment's size as equal to the sum of the steady SOV ratios for those other candidates: 42-47 percent. And the third is the voter segment made up of those in-between the first segment and the second segment. We said these are two sets of voters. The first are "probable converts" who when asked how certain they are to vote for GMA would say: "I probably but not definitely will." The second are "possible converts" who when asked the same

question for their chosen other candidate will give a similar answer for that other candidate. We labeled this as the "p/p" or probable/possible convert segment. Our measure of its size was by its definition: [100 - (% disciple segment) - (% negative/hostile segment)]. This came out as 36-43%. This size remains the same for each of the other candidates.

Marketing to the "p/p"

The most important implication of this segmentation is that "any one candidate can only increase his/her SOVs and so his/her winning chance by getting the "p/p" (probable/possible) convert segment" voters to choose him/her over any of the other candidates. As we've shown, the size of this voter segment is 36-43 percent or 13.6 million to 16.3 million. These figures set the limit for any one candidate's SOV gain or surge.

GMA gained 10 percentage points for her SOV from 17 percent in the November 2003 survey to 27 percent in the January 2004 survey. This 10 percentage points came from the 36-43 percent p/p voter segment. Similarly with FPJ who more than doubled his SOVs from 14 percent in the September 2003 survey to 36 percent in the January 2004 survey. FPJ and his disciple voter segment drew those 22 percentage points increase also from this same 36-43 percent p/p voter segment. That's a lot of SOV surge, the kind of SOV surge size that Bro. Eddie's 7-7 strategy would need to gain for Bro. Eddie a convincing winnability image.

So it's clear that Bro. Eddie and his disciple voters must also tap their 7-7 from the 36-43 percent p/p voter segment. Note that as of the latest SWS February 2004 survey, 29.3 percent of these 36-43 percent p/p voters have been recruited into the combined GMA and FPJ camps. What's left for Bro. Eddie and the other candidates (Roco and Lacson) is 6.7 percent to 13.7 percent. This means Bro. Eddie's campaigners are confronted with the unenviable task of persuading these larger 29.3 percent to leave GMA or FPJ in favor of Bro. Eddie, as well as drawing those 6.7 percent-13.7 percent to convert to pro-Bro. Eddie voters. (To be continued)

E-mail your questions or comments to MarketingRx@SaltandLightVentures.com. Or text us at 0919-314-5412! We have a new text feedback software from TxtGenie.

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The permittee shall duly inform the public by way of publishing in any one (1) of the top three (3) leading newspapers in the country that import of this product is covered by conditions for approval as provided in Department of Agriculture Memorandum Circular No. 8, Series of 2003. A copy of such publication shall be submitted to the Bureau of Plant Industry within ten (10) days after publication.

A violation of this condition shall lead to revocation of this permit as provided in DA Administrative Order No. 8, Series of 2002.

This permit is valid for five years and shall expire on December 4, 2008 subject to the terms and conditions set forth in Administrative Order No. 8, Series of 2002.

Issued this 5th day of December 2003.

(Sgd.) BLOMPAR ADIONG
Director

(PDI-March 26, 2004)

Republic of the Philippines
ISABELA STATE UNIVERSITY
Echague, Isabela

INVITATION TO BID

The Isabela State University invites interested and qualified Security Agencies to participate in the bidding for security services.

Below are the eligibility requirements to be submitted at the office of the Chairman of the Bids and Awards Committee Secretariat on or before April 5, 2004.

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| 1. Letter of Intent | 9. Tax Identification Number |
| 2. Company Profile | 10. VAT Registration |
| 3. Organizational Chart | 11. List of contracted clients |
| 4. License to Operate | 12. DOLE Clearance |
| 5. List of License Firearms | 13. SSS Certificate membership/clearance |
| 6. DTI Registration | 14. Audited Financial Statement 3 years |
| 7. SEC Registration | 15. Certificate that the company is not blacklisted |
| 8. Mayor's Permit 2004 | |

The pre-bidding conference will be on April 5, 2004, 9:00 A.M. at the ALBA HALL Administration Building, Isabela State University, Echague, Isabela.

The Isabela State University reserves the right to reject any or all bids, waive any informality or accept such bids as may be considered advantageous to the government.

Interested bidders may obtain further information from the Bids and Awards Committee Secretariat or call (078) 672-20-20.

(Sgd.) ROMEO R. QUILANG
Chair, Bids and Awards Committee

(PDI-March 19 & 26, 2004)

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC



ALTERLYN P. MATERIANO

This is to inform the public that ALTERLYN PANGILINAN MATERIANO, whose photo appears above, is no longer connected with DATABLITZ, INC. effective 22nd October 2003. Any transaction made through her will not be honored by the company.

(PDI-March 26, 2004)

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC



RHOBELYN T. LAZARO



MYLINE A. FIGURACION

This is to inform the public that RHOBELYN TOLENTINO LAZARO and MYLINE ALIADO FIGURACION, whose photos appear above, are no longer connected with DATABLITZ, INC. effective 13th of March, 2004. Any transaction made through these persons will not be honored by the company.

(PDI-March 26, 2004)

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Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas

BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
(Head Office)

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) invites interested general building contractors currently with Philippine Contractors Accreditation Board (PCAB) License to apply for eligibility and if later found eligible, to bid for the project described below:

Project Title : Proposed Rehabilitation of Unit D-418 Ocean Villas Condominium
Scope of Work : Furnishing of all materials, labor, tools, equipment, technical supervision and other services and performing all operations necessary for the completion of the proposed rehabilitation of unit D-418 Ocean Villas Condominium all in accordance with the approved plans and specifications and subject to the terms and conditions of the contract.
Project Location : Puerto Aspi, Ternate, Cebu
Approved Budget : Pesos One Million Five Thousand Pesos Only (P1,005,000.00)
Source of Funding : Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas
Minimum Requirement (Criteria) : PCAB License

Contractor's Construction Experience : (AC Classification at least "Small B" (Building and Industrial Plant))
Should have completed within the last five (5) years (1999 to present) at least one (1) project involving construction/renovation of commercial offices or residential buildings requiring high and finishes costing not less than five hundred thousand pesos. The contractor's project manager should be a registered architect or civil engineer with at least three years experience in construction with projects of similar nature.
Certification of Satisfactory Performance : Should be able to submit notarized affidavits of Satisfactory Performance for the declared completed similar project at least One Million Five Thousand Pesos (P1,005,000.00)

Net Financial Contracting Capacity computed as 10x (Current Asset less Current Liabilities) minus (Value of all on-going contracts including awarded yet to be started)
Credit Line / Cash Deposit Certificate Req'd. : Pesos One Hundred Thousand Pesos (P100,000.00)

Eligibility Statement Forms : Two Hundred Pesos per set (P200.00/set)
Cost of Forms : March 19 to 26, 2004
Date : March 29, 2004

Deadline of Submission : April 14, 2004
Notice of Eligibility/Ineligibility : Shall be issued only to eligible contractors upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Two Thousand Pesos (P2,000.00)
Date : April 15 to 16, 2004

Bid/Tender Documents Issuance : April 20, 2004 10:00 a.m.
Pre-bid Conference : BAC Secretariat, Rm 204, BSP Main Complex, A. Mabini cor P. Ocampo Sts.
Date and Time : May 18, 2004 / 10:00 a.m.
Venue

Submission and Opening of Bids : May 18, 2004 / 10:00 a.m.
Deadline of Submission

For inquiries, please call BAC Secretariat - telephone no. 524-7011 local 3143.

The venue for the issuance and submission of accomplished eligibility statements and bid documents is at the BAC Secretariat, Room 204 2nd Floor - Five Storey Building BSP Complex, A. Mabini cor. P. Ocampo Sts., Manila, 9:30 am to 12:00 pm and 1:30 pm to 4:00 pm

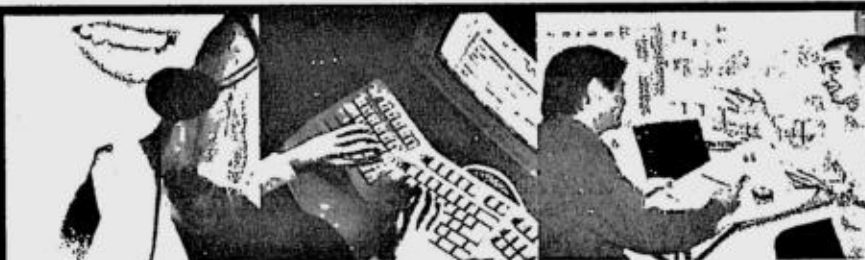
Schedule for issuance of notice of eligibility/ineligibility up to deadline of submission of bids may be subject to change.

The provisions of Republic Act No. 9184 & its Implementing Rules and Regulations relative to the bidding and award of contract including its implementation shall apply.

BSP reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any defect or formality therein, or accept such bid or award any part thereof to any contractor whose bid is/are evaluated to be most advantageous to BSP. Furthermore, BSP is not obligated to compensate/indemnify the contractor for any expenses or loss that may be incurred in the preparation of bids nor does it guarantee that an award of contract will be made.

(Sgd.) MARCOS J. SIONGCO, JR.
Chairman

(PDI-March 19 & 26, 2004)



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ALL ROADS will lead to Dusit Hotel Nikko on March 26 for all technocrats and technology-driven individuals as Media



G8way Corp. and PC World Philippines unveil the most outstanding information technology products of 2003 in the 1st PC World Philippines Annual Awards.

Aimed to highlight and give recognition to the best IT products in terms of performance (benchmarks scores), features and design, ease of use, packaging, support, and price, the Annual Awards will hand out the Best IT Product Awards, to those which have passed the stringent qualifications set by the judging committee, and, Users' Choice Awards for the top pick coming from the readers of PC World Philippines.

The 1st PCW Annual Awards happens on March 26 at 6:30 p.m. in Ballroom A & B of Dusit Hotel Nikko. For ticket reservations, please call Ann Casihan at 8128401-03 loc. 149.

Sponsors for the 1st PCW Annual Awards are Chase Technologies Corp., Epson Phils. Corp., JITSE-Phil. Foundation Inc., Kodak Phils. Ltd., Mocomtech Phils. Inc., OpenS2 Corp., Topnotch Group Corp., and Xitrix Computer Corp. Official media sponsors are Computervorld Philippines, Enterprise, Fast Forward, ITNetcentral and Phil. Daily Inquirer.

People, Events & Products

Saving money while saving lives

IN A recent survey done by the Philippine National Statistical Coordination Board, more than one third of the country's population is living below the poverty line. In the survey that was released in the early part of January this year, it was reported that 26.5 million Filipinos are straining to make ends meet.

Mang Noel's family is included in this statistics. His household is an epitome of a typical Pinoy family, with the father being the sole breadwinner and the mother staying at home as plain housewife. Together, they try to budget the family's meager earnings in order to buy the necessities. Being a hypertensive, Mang Noel's medication even makes the financial problems worse, and when they can no longer make ends meet, it is usually Mang Noel's medication that is sacrificed. Although he is aware of the consequences of neglecting his medications, like the possibility of stroke or heart attack, his family's needs must take precedence over his own.

The story of Mang Noel's family is not the only isolated case wherein the medication of a family member is taken into the backseat in lieu of other important expenditures. In fact, in the Family Income and Expenditures survey done in the Philippines in 1997, medicine occupies only the number 13th slot in the family's expenditure. The average Filipino in-

come is P120,000/year and only two percent of that income is allocated for medical expenditure.

In the Philippine setting, the price of medicine is one very important factor in determining whether a patient will adhere to a treatment regimen. In the survey conducted, it revealed that 43 percent of the Filipinos, regardless of their socioeconomic status, look at the price as an important decision point in buying their medicine being prescribed by MDs for hypertension and diabetes. The same survey also showed that 11 percent of patients who cannot afford the medicines would just stop medication. Non-affordability often results to difficulty in buying and therefore utilizing medicines. Even for chronic diseases wherein long-term treatment is very important, the patient will not take the medicine for the simple reason that it costs too much.

Of course, there are consequences for this kind of action. He might think that he is saving the money supposed to be used in buying his medicines, but in reality, he could be in for a more expensive scenario. The complications that might arise due to his failure to take his medication might even cost him more than what he would have spent if he bought his medicines.

This condition catalyzed the introduction of pharmacoeconomics in the country. The principle of pharma-

coeconomics is to help the patient follow the required treatment by providing him with a bioequivalent medicine at a more reasonable cost. Bioequivalence means that the drug is safe and has the same therapeutic effect of the originator product.

Doctors and patients have long been clamoring for more affordable yet equally effective medicines. Through pharmacoeconomics, medical practitioners now have alternatives to the more expensive drugs plus the assurance that the medicine prescribed is really taken by the patient in the right dosage. Being the first one to decide what medicine should be bought, the physicians will now have the chance to improve the healthcare in the country. Doctors will feel more fulfilled because they can now better manage and treat diseases.

For the part of the patient, the primary benefit of pharmacoeconomics is an improved compliance in taking their medicines, especially with chronic diseases wherein medicines have to be taken religiously for years and even for life. This also means a guaranteed protection for a longer period of time and a better quality of life.

Unilab continues to strengthen its dedication to provide Filipinos with effective medicines that are reasonably priced, or quoting its tagline "gamot na umuubra sa presyong di sobra".



TOPPING-OFF CEREMONY AT ONE AEROPOLIS

One Aeropolis, the mid-rise condominium project of Ayala Land Inc subsidiary Laguna Properties Holdings Inc (LPHI), recently topped-off the first of several mid-rise buildings in Sucat, Parañaque. After its formal launch in June 2003, construction went on full swing. LPHI's One Aeropolis sets an important milestone towards the fulfillment of its promise to its buyers and partners of fast delivery of units. The first batch of units will be turned over to buyers ahead of its 2-year delivery schedule. The topping-off ceremony was well attended by LPHI's clients, guests, and brokers. Hosted by One Aeropolis unit owner and popular host Paolo Bediones, the event was marked by the meaningful topping-off activity with balloon-release with

entertainment provided by the Sabor Latino band. Each One Aeropolis building is especially designed to give that spacious, bright and relaxing ambiance making it a perfect sanctuary for rest and privacy, the reasons building 1 has been sold out in a span of 6 months. One Aeropolis is located across SM Sucat. For inquiries, call 814-7671 and 814-7497. Shown are the topping-off ceremony participants (from left) design architect Meloy Casas, technical planning manager Jeremy Acosta, AVP for planning Steve Dy, project manager Al Manus, unit owner Jessica Estrera, AVP in house sales Ricky Celis, building contractor Tito Denising, and senior division manager Jing Concepcion.

BMA supports Bagong Silang feeding program

AS PART of the company's commitment to give a percentage of its income to charity, Businessmaker Academy (BMA) recently sponsored the Bagong Silang Elementary School Feeding Program.

The Program has been designed to regularly provide healthy food to over 150 school children diagnosed as moderate to severely malnourished by Bagong Silang Health and Nutrition Director Dr. Clarinda "Kaye" Parante. Pupils from Grades 1 to 6 have been detected to be alarmingly underweight and are noticeable undersized for their age.

Clarita E. Alejandro, Bagong Silang Elementary School Principal, says, "We try our best to give these children a good education so they could have better opportunities in life. However, they experience difficulties in learning simply because their stomachs are empty." Instances wherein children break out in tears due to hunger during class hours are a normal occurrence in this school.

"The aim if this program is to help our students focus more on their lessons. When their basic need for food is met, learning becomes more effective," adds Kaye.

Located between Sucat and Cupang, the Bagong Silang Elementary School was founded by civic-spirited people in 1987. Originally an Outreach School of Benedictine Abbey with one

makeshift classroom, it gradually increased and became a public school in 1991 to cater to the deprived urban poor.

Although the school is city-sponsored, the need for further funding is apparent. It services an estimated 1009 pupils with approximately 50 children for every instructor in makeshift classrooms. Some of the teachers have not been paid their full wages due to budget problems of their city. Funding to construct more classrooms is vital. Aside from contributions for the Program, additional donations for school supplies are also much needed.

BMA, a progressive business and livelihood training center, urges other similar-minded socially responsible companies to join it in supporting the Bagong Silang Elementary School Feeding Program.

Cindy Meghrajani, BMA's VP-sales and marketing for corporate affairs, shares, "It was indeed heartwarming to visit the school children of Bagong Silang. The experience allowed our employees a break away from our corporate lives and get in touch with real people-children who are delightfully well-behaved with a noticeable light of hope in their eyes."

For individuals and companies interested in giving contributions and donations to Bagong Silang Elementary School, call Kaye at 850-6605 or 0919-3442384.



TESDA REGION XI BEEFS UP DAVAO CENTER

Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas delivers her keynote address at the cornerstone-laying ceremony for the Korea-Philippines Vocational Training Center now being built in Davao City by the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA). Supported by the Korea International Cooperation Agency (Koica), the project is designed for the skills training of the unemployed, financially underprivileged people, farmers and their children, cooperative farm workers, women, and re-

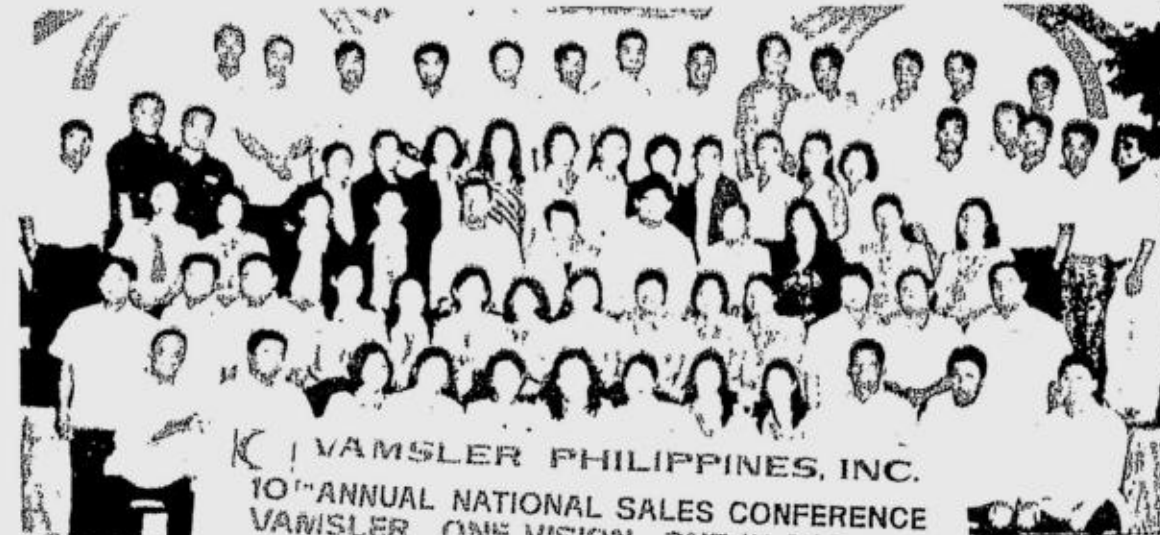
trenched workers, according to Tesda Region XI Director Orlando Naag (right). To Naag's right are Mindanao Business Council's former chair Joji Ilagan-Bian, Tesda director general Alcestis Guiang, Koica president Kim Suk Hyun, Korean Ambassador Son Sang Ha, Department of Agriculture Region XI director Roger Chiu, Presidential Assistant for Mindanao Jesus Dureza and lawyer Melchor Quitain representing Davao City Mayor Rodrigo Duterte.



THAI IN STAR ALLIANCE SALES BLITZ

Thai Airways International (THAI) led its counterparts and co-members of Star Alliance, the world's largest airline coalition, on a sales blitz that took them to the travel agents in Binondo to promote their latest travel promos for the summer season. Shown are Star Alliance members (front row, from left) Mimi Co of LOT, Gigi Martinez and Jeannie Magluyan of Asiana,

Weng Meneses of Lufthansa, Malu Duenas of Thai Airways, Evelyn Rivera of British Midland, Marjorie Juliano of Air Canada, Del Arriola of Thai Airways, Jojo Santos of Lufthansa, and Pam Cuachon of United Airlines with Betty Ngo of Traders Travel Corp (3rd from right). Shown at the back row, from left, are Vince Reyes of Varig and John Paul Sarmiento of LOT.



VAMSLER PHILIPPINES' 10TH NATIONAL SALES CONFAB

Vamsler Philippines Inc, a national pharmaceutical company, recently held its 10th Annual National Sales Conference Jan. 31 to Feb. 3 at the Zanzibar Beach Resort and Convention Hotel in Olango City. Led by Rudy Roberto, marketing manager, and Vinia de Guzman, general manager, the affair was marked with plan pre-

sentations and training lectures culminating with the awards of recognition to outstanding performers. Major awards were given to Raymond Uy (PSR of the Year) and Charry Marasigan (DM of the Year). The slogan for the year is 'Vamsler: One Vision. One in Action. Conquering the Way to Dominance in 2004.'

Voice, dance and acting workshops this summer

THE CENTER for Arts Foundation Inc, announces its registration for their Summer Workshop in Voice, Dance and Acting all in one course. The workshop is open to all from ages 4 to 65 years old. The Performing Arts course will start on April and will last until the first week of June (before the school year opens). The workshop requires no tuition fee except for a minimal materials fee of P2,500. This will cover all manuals and demo CDs, ID, certificate and other materials to be used for the

entire duration of the workshop. Classes are being offered on weekdays schedules which are specially designed for students and a weekend schedule for those who are working. Each session last for three hours. At the end of the workshops, students will hold their practicums either at the Music Museum, Greenhills or at the Meralco Theater. Interested applicants may call the Center for Arts through 727-8347. Registration is until April 11 only



APRIL FOOLS AT CSB HOTEL

Watch 'April Fools Stand-Up Comedy' at the CSB Hotel International Conference Center on April 2 at the Roof Deck Garden & Restaurant. For P200 (consumable) from 7 p.m. onwards, laughter is in the air. Vice Ganda and Pooh promise an evening of music and fun. Their spiels will rib your funny bones and make you forget the heat of summer. Experience the cool evening breeze at the Roof Deck Garden and Restaurant with backdrop of cascading man-made waterfalls amidst a sip of a favorite drink and mouth-watering finger foods. CSB Hotel International Conference Center is located at Arellano Avenue corner Estrada streets in Malate, Manila. For ticket and sales reservations, call 400-3333, fax 400-7401 or 400-5455.



MEAL, FOOD PASS ACCEPTED IN PANCAKE HOUSE

Sodexo Meal and Food Pass, the first service voucher used to manage employee meal and groceries benefit, is now also accepted in Pancake House all over Luzon. Pancake House brings more value to the network already accepting the Meal and Food Pass, including SM Supermarkets, selected SM Foodcourt outlets, Binggo! and other restaurants. Signing the agreement are Bernadette Lee, director of sales and marketing of Pancake House, and Frans Tiebout, president and general manager of Sodexo Pass Inc.

ProductFiles

Camping Gear

THULE/EGR Philippines, the authorized domestic market distributor of Thule Roof Rack Systems of Sweden, recently announced the availability of the Thule Roof Tent System. The Thule Tent System is a popular outdoor accessory in both the European and Western markets. It is designed to be a perfect fit for most Japanese, European and American cars and SUV's.

Made of cutting edge materials, the Thule Roof Tent System has undergone stringent quality testing and has passed the four seasons test as required by the Ford Q1, QS9000, the German DIN 75302, German TUV and the ISO norm 11154 and 14001. It is the ideal camping gear for that weekend getaway with family and friends.

Shown is a Nissan X-Trail fitted with a



Thule Bike Rack and Roof Tent system on display at the Nissan Commonwealth Inc. (Niscom) dealership along Commonwealth Avenue, Quezon City. Niscom is an authorized distributor of the Thule Tent System and offers it as an exclusive dealer option for Nissan owners. For inquiries, call 744-6367.



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- 3 SCOOBY DOO 2
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- 5 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN
- 6 SORUM
- 7 THE GRUDGE 2
- 8 DEATH CURSE
- 9 OTSO-OTSO
- 10 HIDALGO
- 11 HIGHWAYMEN
- 12 KARIBAL

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
8350749

- 1 BUTTERFLY EFFECT
- 2 DEATH CURSE
- 3 TORQUE
- 4 HIGHWAYMEN
- 5 THE GRUDGE 2
- 6 HIDALGO
- 7 OTSO-OTSO
- 8 SCOOBY DOO 2
- 9 50 FIRST DATES
- 10 THE CURSE
- 11 GOTHICA
- 12 KARIBAL

SM CITY MANILA
5229240

- 1 THE GRUDGE 2
- 2 BUTTERFLY EFFECT
- 3 WISE GIRLS
- 4 50 FIRST DATES
- 5 SCOOBY DOO 2
- 6 HIDALGO
- 7 KARIBAL
- 8 DEATH CURSE
- 9 OTSO-OTSO
- 10 TORQUE
- 11 HIGHWAYMEN
- 12 THE CURSE

SM CITY NORTH EDSA
9285452

- 1 KARIBAL
- 2 SCOOBY DOO 2
- 3 THE BUTTERFLY EFFECT
- 4 THE GRUDGE 2
- 5 OTSO-OTSO
- 6 HIDALGO
- 7 50 FIRST DATES
- 8 HIGHWAYMEN

SM CITY STA. MESA
7149522 • 7161416

- 1 OTSO-OTSO
- 2 THE GRUDGE 2
- 3 50 FIRST DATES
- 4 DUDA/DOUBT
- 5 HIGHWAYMEN
- 6 THE CURSE
- 7 SCOOBY DOO 2
- 8 HIDALGO
- 9 BUTTERFLY EFFECT
- 10 KARIBAL

SM CINEMA TUTUBAN
2514302

- 1 SCOOBY DOO 2
- 2 HIGHWAYMEN
- 3 OTSO-OTSO
- 4 KARIBAL

North

SM CITY MARILAO
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- 1 HIDALGO
- 2 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN
- 3 OTSO-OTSO
- 4 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE

SM CITY PAMPANGA
7128015

- 1 SCOOBY DOO 2
- 2 TORQUE
- 3 LOVE ACTUALLY
- 4 LANGIT MO, KALIGAYAHAN KO
- 5 THE GRUDGE 2
- 6 OTSO-OTSO

SM CITY BACUIO
(074) 4484505

- 1 HIDALGO
- 2 IN THE CUT
- 3 OTSO-OTSO
- 4 SCOOBY DOO 2

South

SM CITY LAS PIÑAS
8066880

- 1 RING: THE SPIRAL
- 2 SCOOBY DOO 2
- 3 DEATH CURSE
- 4 50 FIRST DATES
- 5 BUTTERFLY EFFECT
- 6 HIDALGO
- 7 OTSO-OTSO
- 8 HIGHWAYMEN
- 9 THE GRUDGE 2
- 10 KARIBAL

SM CITY BICUTAN
7763555

- 1 SCOOBY DOO 2
- 2 OTSO-OTSO
- 3 50 FIRST DATES
- 4 HIGHWAYMEN

SM SUPER CENTER SUCAT
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- 1 HIGHWAYMEN
- 2 SCOOBY DOO 2
- 3 OTSO-OTSO
- 4 KARIBAL

SM CITY BACOOR
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- 1 DEATH CURSE
- 2 SCOOBY DOO 2
- 3 HIDALGO
- 4 THE GRUDGE 2
- 5 50 FIRST DATES
- 6 OTSO-OTSO
- 7 BUTTERFLY EFFECT
- 8 KARIBAL

SM CITY LUCENA
(043) 7108977-30

- 1 SOMETHING'S GOTTA GIVE
- 2 GOTHICA
- 3 DRAGON VS. NINJA
- 4 OTSO-OTSO

Visayas & Mindanao

SM CITY CEBU
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- 1 GOTHICA
- 2 HIDALGO
- 3 SCOOBY DOO 2
- 4 NIGHTMARE
- 5 BONE SNATCHER
- 6 PEEPSHOW
- 7 OTSO-OTSO
- 8 TORQUE

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- 1 WATER DEMON
- 2 RESERVED
- 3 SCOOBY DOO 2
- 4 DUPLEX
- 5 GOTHICA
- 6 OTSO-OTSO
- 7 RESERVED
- 8 TOTALLY BLONDE

SM CITY DAVAO
(082) 2976998

- 1 HIDALGO
- 2 TOTALLY BLONDE
- 3 OTSO-OTSO
- 4 GOTHICA
- 5 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN
- 6 SCOOBY DOO 2

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO
(080) 8552884

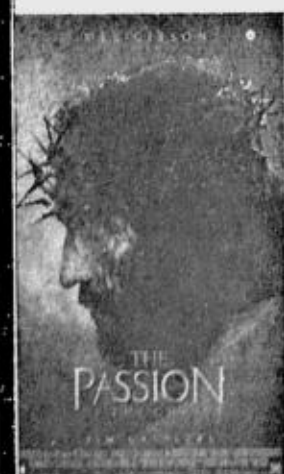
- 1 WISHING STAIRS
- 2 OTSO-OTSO
- 3 GOTHICA
- 4 TORQUE

**—THE—
PODIUM**

1

SCOOBY DOO 2
11:05 FS/11:35
MFS/1:40/3:45/5:50/7:55
9:30 LFS/10:00
LMS/11:35 END
2
50 FIRST DATES
10:35 FS/11:05 MFS/
1:15/3:25/5:35/7:45/
9:25 LFS/9:55 LMS/
11:35 END
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1 HIGHWAYMEN	1 THE BUTTERFLY EFFECT	1 HIGHWAYMEN	1 50 FIRST DATES	1 SCOOBY DOO 2
2 SCOOBY DOO 2	2 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN	2 SCOOBY DOO 2	2 SCOOBY DOO 2	2 HIGHWAYMEN
3 OTSO-OTSO	3 50 FIRST DATES	3 SCOOBY DOO 2	3 THE MISSING	3 50 FIRST DATES
4 50 FIRST DATES	4 WISEGIRLS	4 SCOOBY DOO 2	4 LOVE ACTUALLY	4 SCOOBY DOO 2
	5 HIGHWAYMEN	5 SCOOBY DOO 2	5 HIGHWAYMEN	5 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN
	6 SCOOBY DOO 2	6 SCOOBY DOO 2		
	7 THE MISSING	7 THE MISSING		

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- 2 SCOOBY DOO-2
- 3 SPIRAL
- 4 SCOOBY DOO-2
- 5 HIGHWAYMEN
- 6 HIDALGO
- 7 50 FIRST DATES
- 8 OTSO OTSO
- 9 DEATH CURSE
- 10 GRUDGE-2

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- 2 SCOOBY DOO-2
- 3 50 FIRST DATE
- 4 HIGHWAY MEN

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- 1 OTSO OTSO
- 2 SCOOBY DOO-2
- 3 KARIBAL

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- 2 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
- 3 OTSO OTSO
- 4 SCOOBY DOO-2
- 5 KARIBAL

METROPOLIS
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Alabang) tel 850.4285

- 1 PEEP SHOW
- 2 KARIBAL
- 3 HIGHWAY MEN
- 4 OTSO OTSO
- 5 SCOOBY DOO-2
- 6 THE CURSE
- 7 DRAGON VS' NINJA
- 8 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN

PREMIERE CINEMA
(Makati City) tel 892.2503

- 1 SCOOBY DOO-2

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balaiga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007

- 1 OTSO OTSO
- 2 SOMETHING GOTTA GIVE

Sunshine
(FTI, Taguig) tel 838.4301 loc. 3376

- 1 KAMANDAG
- 2 BLOODY WISH
- 3
- 4

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without prior notice

GOTESCO CINEMA
Gotesco City
(Manila) tel 734.8588

RESERVE

Gotesco Grand Central
(Caloocan) tel 364.3781

- 1 KARIBAL
- 2 OTSO OTSO
- 3 SCOOBY DOO-2
- 4 SORUM
- 5 HIDALGO
- 6 BUTTERFLY EFFECTS
- 7 THE CURSE
- 8 U-BELT
- 9 PEEP SHOW

Gotesco Commonwealth
tel 951.0083

RESERVE

Gotesco Ortigas
tel 656.6795

- 1 TORQUE
- 2 OTSO OTSO
- 3 MR NICE GUY
- 4 KARIBAL
- 5 SCOOBY DOO-2

Universal
(Manila) tel 733.2470

RESERVE

Dilson
(Manila) tel 734.7724

KARIBAL

Mandaluyong
tel 533.3851 / 533.3856

- 1 HIGHWAY MEN
- 2 OTSO OTSO
- 3 KARIBAL
- 4 SCOOBY DOO-2
- 5 RESERVE

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029

- 1 KARIBAL
- 2 SCOOBY DOO-2

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MALL CINEPLEX 7
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- 1 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
- 2 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
- 3 HIGHWAY MEN
- 4 SCOOBY DOO-2
- 5 50 FIRST DATE
- 6 THE CURSE
- 7 OTSO OTSO

Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03

- 1 SKY OF LOVE
- 2 OTSO OTSO
- 3 SCOOBY DOO-2
- 4 HAUNTED OFFICE

Cine Nepo
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.0121

- 1 OTSO OTSO
- 2 DUPLEX
- 3 TORQUE
- 4 SCOOBY DOO-2

Cine Nepo
(Dagupan City) tel (075) 515.8489

- 1 OTSO OTSO
- 2 SPIRAL
- 3 GOTHICA
- 4 TORQUE

Cinema 2000 Target Mall
(Sta. Rosa, Laguna) tel (049) 837.0926

- 1 OTSO OTSO
- 2 BONE SNATCHER
- 3 SCOOBY DOO-2

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383

- 1 OTSO OTSO
- 2 SCOOBY DOO-2
- 3 50 FIRST DATES
- 4 LOVE ACTUALLY

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Binan) tel (049) 411.1146

- 1 OTSO OTSO
- 2 BONE SNATCHER
- 3 SCOOBY DOO-2
- 4 LOVE ACTUALLY

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel (075) 568.6771

- 1 SOMETHING GOTTA GIVE
- 2 GOTHICA
- 3 OTSO OTSO

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729

- 1 OTSO OTSO
- 2 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN
- 3 GHOST HOUSE
- 4 TORQUE

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 795-1320

- 1 TEXAS CHAINSAW MASSACRE
- 2 OTSO OTSO
- 3 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276

- 1 DOUBLE SEEDUCTION
- 2 SAKIM SA PAG-IBIG
- 3 PEEP SHOW
- 4 THE PHONE

Lianas Movie City
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202

- 1 I AM DINA
- 2 PEEP SHOW
- 3 SCOOBY DOO-2
- 4 SORUM
- 5 OTSO OTSO

Olivarez Tri-Cinema
(Binan) tel (049) 511.8883

- 1 OTSO OTSO
- 2 SCOOBY DOO-2

Olivarez Los Baños
tel (049) 249.2558

- 1 SCOOBY DOO-2
- 2 OTSO OTSO
- 3 PEEP SHOW

Mega Center Mall
(Cabanatuan City) tel (044) 463.3283

- 1 DUPLEX
- 2 GOTHICA
- 3 TORQUE
- 4 OTSO OTSO

Cabuyao
(Laguna City) tel 520.8314

RESERVE

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790

- 1 LANGIT KO KALIGAYAHAN KO
- 2 THE CURSE
- 3 SCOOBY DOO-2
- 4 OTSO OTSO

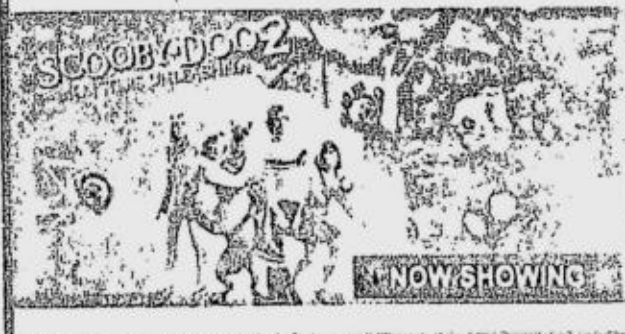
Emperor
(Rosario Cavite) tel (046) 438.1657

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- 2 OTSO OTSO

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CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN
11:40, 1:50, 4:00
6:10, 8:20
GP

SCOOBY DOO 2
11:55, 2:25, 4:55
7:25, 9:55
GP

50 FIRST DATES
11:40, 1:35, 3:30, 5:25
7:20, 9:15, 11:10
PG-13

HIGHWAYMEN
11:20, 1:20, 3:20
5:20, 7:20, 9:20
R-13

POWER PLANT CINEMA

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DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

WISE GIRLS R18
1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 9:30

SCOOBY DOO 2 GP
1:20, 3:30, 5:40, 7:50, 10:00

SCOOBY DOO 2 GP
12:45, 2:55, 5:05, 7:15, 9:25

HIGHWAYMEN R13
12:20, 2:20, 4:20, 6:20, 8:20, 10:20

LOVE ACTUALLY R18
1:25, 4:10, 6:55, 9:40

50 FIRST DATES PG13
12:15, 2:10, 4:15, 6:10, 8:15, 10:20

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GP

CINEMA 2 **50 FIRST DATES**
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PG13

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CINEMA 1 THX **SCOOBY DOO 2**
11:05, 1:10, 3:15, 5:20, 7:25, 9:30

2 **50 FIRST DATES** 10:25, 12:40, 2:55, 5:10, 7:25, 9:40

3 **BUTTERFLY EFFECT** 11:55, 2:05, 4:15, 6:25, 8:35, 10:30

4 **HIGHWAYMEN** 12:20, 2:25, 4:30, 6:35, 8:40, 10:30

5 **SCOOBY DOO 2** 11:35, 1:40, 3:45, 5:50, 7:55, 10:00

6 **THE GRUDGE 2** 12:20, 2:25, 4:30, 6:35, 8:40, 10:30

7 **OTSO-OTSO** 10:35, 12:50, 3:05, 5:20, 7:35, 9:50

8 **WISE GIRLS** 11:35, 1:50, 4:05, 6:20, 8:35, 10:30

9 **LOVE ACTUALLY** 10:40, 1:25, 4:10, 6:55, 9:40

10 **DEATH CURSE** 12:20, 2:25, 4:30, 6:35, 8:40, 10:30

MATINEE: Monday to Friday / 10 am-4pm except holidays
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Regular Price: P130 THX / P95/65 for two levels cinemas / P95 for one level cinemas

ERMITA 526-7185 / 536-7809 to 12

1 **SCOOBY DOO 2** 10:15, 12:10, 2:05, 4:00, 5:55, 7:50, 9:50

2 **THE GRUDGE 2** 11:15, 1:05, 2:55, 4:45, 6:35, 8:25, 10:00

3 **WISE GIRLS** 11:55, 2:00, 4:05, 6:10, 8:15, 10:00

4 **DEATH CURSE** 11:15, 1:05, 2:55, 4:45, 6:35, 8:25, 10:00

5 **OTSO-OTSO** 10:10, 12:35, 2:40, 4:55, 7:10, 9:40

6 **HIGHWAYMEN** 10:40, 12:40, 2:40, 4:40, 6:40, 8:35, 10:00

7 **50 FIRST DATES** 10:50, 1:00, 3:10, 5:20, 7:30, 9:50

Big R Supercenter METRO EAST 682-8193/99 / 682-8280

1 **HIGHWAYMEN** 10:50, 12:50, 2:50, 4:50, 6:50, 9:00

2 **50 FIRST DATES** 11:50, 2:10, 4:30, 6:50, 9:10

3 **KARIBAL** 11:50, 1:40, 3:30, 5:20, 7:10, 9:00

4 **SCOOBY DOO 2** 11:20, 1:40, 4:00, 6:20, 8:40

5 **SCOOBY DOO 2** 10:50, 1:10, 3:30, 5:50, 8:10, 10:30

6 **THE GRUDGE 2** 10:40, 12:40, 2:40, 4:40, 6:40, 8:40

7 **BUTTERFLY EFFECT** 11:00, 1:00, 3:00, 5:00, 7:00, 9:00

8 **OTSO-OTSO** 11:00, 1:30, 4:00, 6:30, 9:00

Big R Supercenter NOVALICHES / FAIRVIEW 935-3229 / 31

1 **SCOOBY DOO 2** 11:25, 1:15, 3:05, 4:55, 6:45, 8:35

2 **OTSO-OTSO** 11:20, 1:35, 3:50, 6:05, 8:30

3 **BUTTERFLY EFFECT** 12:00, 2:25, 4:50, 7:15, 9:00

4 **THE CURSE** 11:50, 1:45, 3:40, 5:35, 7:30, 9:00

5 **HIGHWAYMEN** 11:25, 1:15, 3:05, 4:55, 6:45, 8:35

6 **THE GRUDGE 2** 11:40, 1:45, 3:50, 5:55, 8:10

7 **50 FIRST DATES** 11:45, 1:55, 4:05, 6:15, 8:30

8 **THE NIGHTMARE** 11:00, 12:55, 2:50, 4:45, 6:40, 8:35

Citistore MALABON 288-0985/2575

1 **WISHING STAIRS**

2 **OTSO-OTSO**

3 **SCOOBY DOO 2**

4 **KARIBAL**

Big R Supercenter LIPA 757-3664 / 312-5870

1 **CARMEN**

2 **OTSO-OTSO**

3 **LANGIT MO KALIGAYAHAN KO**

4 **THE CURSE**

5 **SCOOBY DOO 2**

Big R Supercenter DASMARINAS 852-2125

1 **OTSO-OTSO**

2 **LOVE ACTUALLY**

3 **SCOOBY DOO 2**

4 **THE GRUDGE 2**

5 **CARMEN**

Big R Supercenter STA. ROSA (049)837-0907

1 **SCOOBY DOO 2**

2 **BONE SNATCHER**

3 **OTSO-OTSO**

4 **50 FIRST DATES**

5 **LOVE ACTUALLY**

Big R Supercenter STARMILLS 875-1927 / 961-5270

1 **LOVE ACTUALLY**

2 **LANGIT MO KALIGAYAHAN KO**

3 **OTSO-OTSO**

4 **THE GRUDGE 2**

5 **SCOOBY DOO 2**

6 **TORQUE**

IMUS 471-5188 / 875-5558

1 **SCOOBY DOO 2**

2 **50 FIRST DATES**

3 **KARIBAL**

4 **DEATH CURSE**

5 **OTSO-OTSO**

6 **THE GRUDGE 2**

BACOLOD 441-0458/59

1 **SCOOBY DOO 2**

2 **GOTHIKA**

3 **OTSO-OTSO**

4 **CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN**

5 **CARMEN**

6 **DRAGON VS. NINJA**

ILOILO 336-8070/78

1 **SCOOBY DOO 2**

2 **DUPLEX**

3 **OTSO-OTSO**

4 **WATER DEMON**

5 **TOTALLY BLONDE**

6 **GOTHIKA**

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Ali 3 OTSO OTSO

Ali 4 50 FIRST DATES

Ali 5 TORQUE

Ali 6 THE CURSE

Ali 7 HIDALGO

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APR 10 OLPH RETREAT (7AM) SHALOM (2PM)

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ODEON X-MEN 2

ODEON-2 BUKID AY BASA / KASIBULAN

ROBEN BOLD STAR

TANDEM-1 SUGAT

TANDEM-2 KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO

TIMES SPY: LEGEND OF CROCODILE

QUEZON CITY

ACT-1 SENSUAL ISLAND

ACT-2 KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT

ACT-3 ORIGINAL SIN

ACT-4 HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY

CORONET A KARIBAL

CORONET B A MAN APART

QUEZON-1 BERTUD NG PUTIK

REMAR X-MEN 2

REMAR-2 BOLD STAR

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A KARIBAL

B LIBERATED

C

MANDALUYONG CITY

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CINEMA-1 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION

CINEMA-2 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION

CAINTA RIZAL

STA. LUCIA EAST (681-5481 TO 19)

CINEMA-1 OTSO OTSO

CINEMA-2 KARIBAL

CINEMA-3 BUTTERFLY EFFECT

CINEMA-4 (DOLBY DIGITAL) HIDALGO

CINEMA-5 (OTS) CURSE

CINEMA-6 PEEP SHOW

CINEMA-7 TORQUE

CINEMA-8 CHEAPER BY THE DOZEN

CINEMA-9 (OTS) SCOOBY DOO 2

CINEMA-10 (DOLBY DIGITAL) HIGHWAYMEN

CINEMA-11 (SDOS) 50 FIRST DATES

CINEMA-12 GRUDGE 2

CINEMA-14 GHOSTFIGHTER (R)

CINEMA-15 OTSO OTSO

LORES

CINEMA-2 SENSUAL ISLAND

CINEMA-3 KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT

NE CINEMAGIC - CABANATUAN

(LAS PINAS) TORQUE

CINEMA-1 OTSO OTSO

CINEMA-2 GOTHIKA

CINEMA-4

UNIWIIDE COASTAL MALL

(PARANAQUE) SENSUAL ISLAND

CINEMA-1 KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT

CINEMA-2 MEN IN BLACK II

CINEMA-4 SELDA

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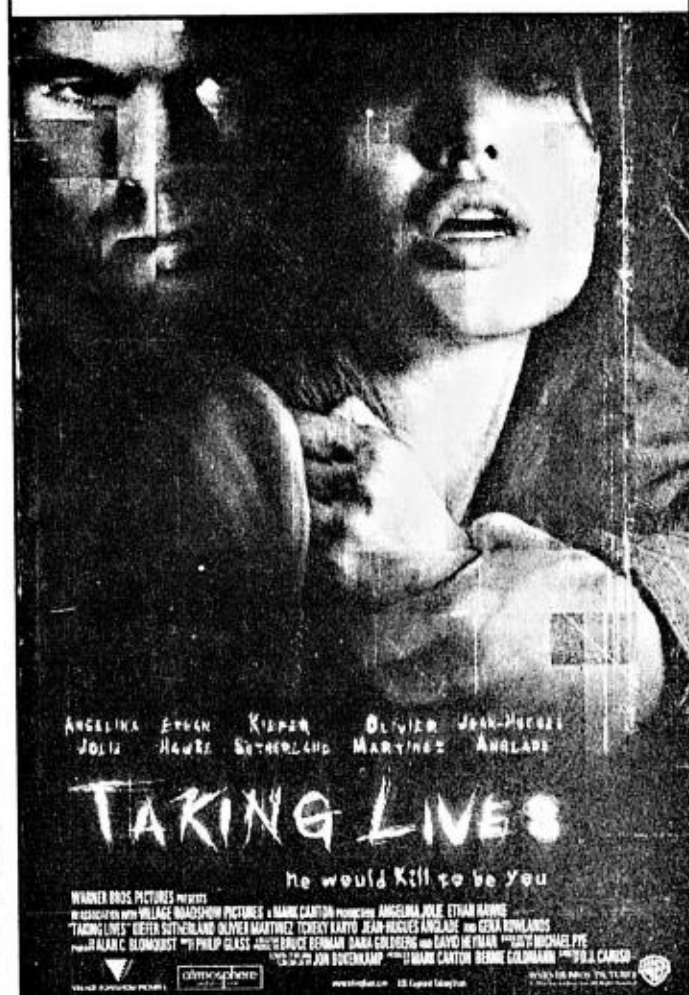
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BUSINESS

Jobs, deficit top US concerns, survey says

WASHINGTON—Weak job growth and a ballooning budget deficit are the biggest problems facing the US economy this year, while monetary policy is "just right," a survey of American businesses out on Thurs-

day showed.

The survey of 203 members of the National Association for Business Economics found respondents evenly divided—at 25 percent each—over whether unem-

ployment or the deficit was the biggest short-term threat to the economy, while 19 percent cited terrorism as the chief worry.

Terrorism topped the list a year ago with 41 percent of the vote, but NABE noted the current survey was taken before the train bombings in Madrid earlier this month that killed 190 people and wounded 1,900.

While terrorism fears have dwindled, the number of respondents citing the burgeoning deficit as the biggest risk climbed from 11 percent last March, while unemployment concerns rose from 16 percent in the most recent August survey.

The budget deficit is expected to surge to half a trillion dollars

this year.

The US economy has notched healthy growth in recent quarters but job gains have remained anemic, and economists worry persistent unemployment could dampen consumer spending and undermine the recovery.

NABE members ranked the aging population as the biggest long-term risk to the economy, followed by the federal budget deficit and health care costs.

While nearly two-thirds of those surveyed felt the government's tax and spending policies were too stimulative, up from 49 percent in August, the vast majority were content with the Federal Reserve's position on interest rates.

Interest rates currently stand at a 1958 low of one percent after 13 cuts since the start of 2001.

"Nearly three-quarters of respondents said current monetary policy is about right, but were evenly divided about future policy, with 48 percent believing rates should remain flat over the next six months and 47 percent saying interest rates should rise," NABE said in the survey.

Just over half—54 percent—believe short-term rates will increase in the next six months, while 43 percent expect them to stay the same.

The lack of strong job growth in recent months has disappointed economists and job-

seekers alike, and the weakness has led many analysts to speculate that interest rates will not rise as quickly as previously thought.

While only 21 percent of the NABE panel said the US current account deficit—currently about 5 percent of gross domestic product—is a threat to financial stability, 52 percent said while it wasn't yet, it will be in the future.

Despite the recent political uproar over jobs being shifted to cheaper overseas locations, only 9 percent of respondents felt trade was hurting employment significantly, while 31 percent said it had at least a small impact and 60 percent felt there was no impact at all.

Reuters

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US denounces EU decision on Microsoft

WASHINGTON—US antitrust regulators sharply rebuked their EU counterparts Wednesday for imposing a record fine and other sanctions on Microsoft, but rivals of the software giant hailed the action as a victory for free competition.

The 497 million euro (\$613 million) fine and other requirements by the European Commission drew a sharp reaction on both sides of the debate on Microsoft in the United States.

Some lashed out at European intrusion into the US market, while Microsoft's technology rivals termed it a positive message for competition in the marketplace.

The US Department of Justice said Wednesday's EU antitrust ruling on Microsoft was "unfortunate" and could have unintended effects on the marketplace.

"Imposing antitrust liability on the basis of product enhancements and imposing 'code removal' remedies may produce unintended consequences," the department's antitrust chief R. Hewitt Pate said in a statement.

But Microsoft rivals called the ruling a vindication of their charges that the company used its dominance to crush competitors.

"This decision is fundamentally significant because the European Commission has formally declared that Microsoft's media player bundling strategy is illegal and has established the guideposts for future bundling cases," said Bob Kimball, vice president and general counsel at RealNetworks.

RealNetworks was a key firm in the EU case because it complained that Microsoft's "bundling" of its media software for audio and

video within the Windows operating system was an abuse of the Microsoft monopoly position.

The EU ordered Microsoft to offer a European version of its dominant Windows operating system without the Media Player program within 90 days.

Microsoft also was ordered to disclose "complete and accurate" data to enable rival companies to offer low-end servers that can work with Windows within 120 days.

Server hardware and software maker Sun Microsystems also hailed the EU decision.

"This decision is important for consumers not only in Europe, but also for increased innovation and competition worldwide," said Lee Patch, Sun's vice president for legal affairs.

Ed Black of the Computer and

Communications Industry Association, a trade group of Microsoft rivals, said the EU decision is a "confirmation of Microsoft's anti-competitive and illegal business tactics."

"The issues outlined today will prevent Microsoft from controlling the platform for the delivery and subsequent control over digital content," Black said.

"The decision prevents Microsoft from 'locking in' their media player and their proprietary format as the de facto standard, which would force developers and consumers alike to bow to whatever demands or taxes Microsoft wishes to place on digital content."

But US Sen. Trent Lott lashed out at the ruling, calling it "an unprecedented intrusion into the US marketplace."

AFP

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ENTERTAINMENT

Editor Louie C. Camino

KINSE ANYOS AD MTRCB: Obscene

By Marinel R. Cruz

THE MOVIE and Television Review and Classification Board has finally put its foot down on the controversy involving Napoleon Brandy's "Kinse Anyos" television and billboard advertisement when it ordered owner Distileria Limtuaco to appear before an adjudication committee last Monday.

In a memorandum to Distileria Limtuaco, MTRCB Chair Marissa Laguardia referred to the advertising material, specifically the advertising headline, "Nakatikim Ka Na Ba Ng Kinse Anyos?" as "obscene" and "pornographic."

She said the censors board has been receiving complaints about the advertisement.

"It appears that your advertisement constitutes obscene publications or pornographic materials, which are offensive to morals and serve not other purpose, but to satisfy the market for lust and pornography," Laguardia said in the memorandum.

Double meaning

Last week, Distileria Limtuaco filed a P5-million lawsuit against the Advertising Board of the Philippines (AdBoard) and AdBoard executive director Oscar Valenzuela after the AdBoard ordered the advertising agency Sinson Lascano Group, which did the Distileria advertising campaign, to pull out all of its "Kinse Anyos" commercials and billboards.

The complaints alleged that the campaign had a double meaning, one of which suggesting men's preference for 15-year-old girls, the AdBoard said.

Laguardia pointed out that since Distileria, through its lawyer Bonifacio Alentajan, questioned the decision of the AdBoard, "then, your company has no valid permit, and is now operating illegally."

The AdBoard issued the permit for the display of the advertisement, Laguardia explained.

Anachronism

"The 'kinse anyos' advertisement must not be shown on television," she told Inquirer Entertainment on Wednesday.

Sen. Francis "Kiko" Pangilinan has joined calls for the pullout of the advertisement in radio, television and billboards. He branded the "Kinse Anyos" headline as an "anachronism in modern day Philippines."

"As a parent of a teenager, I join many others who consider the slogan to be offensive," Pangilinan said in a statement. "The commercial is an assault to decency."

Pangilinan is married to megastar Sharon Cuneta, with whom he has a 3-year-old daughter Frankie. Sharon also has a daughter, Kristina Cassandra, 18, with former husband, actor Gabby Concepcion.

"At a time when we have just passed the law against abuse and exploitation of children, perceptions are rife that the ad undermines the moral foundation of our people," Pangilinan said. "It corrodes the moral fabric

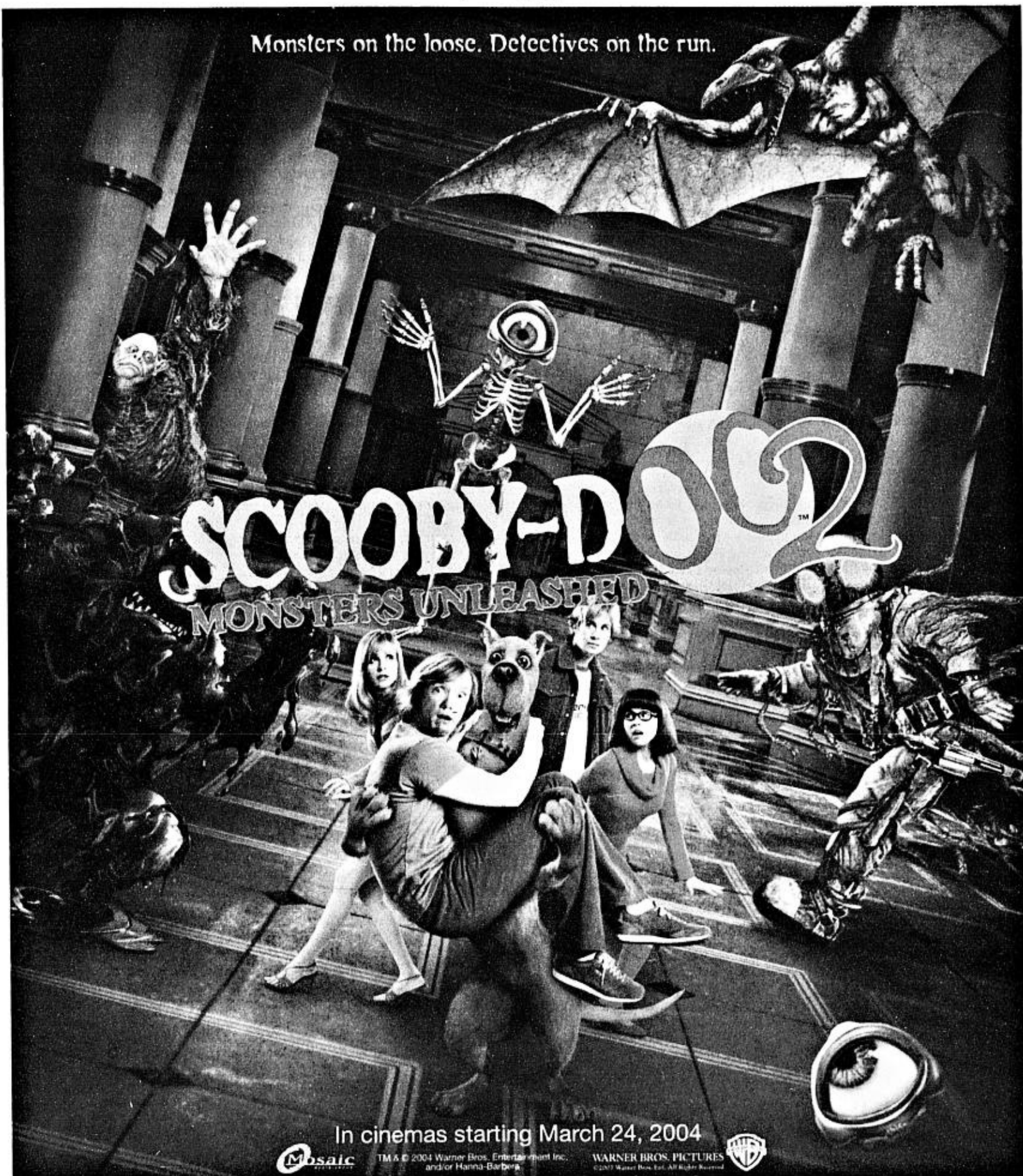
Distileria
Limtuaco
has no
valid
permit,
Board says

which we are trying very hard to protect.

"In coming out with the commercial, the ad makers clearly violated the law against child abuse," he added.

Senatorial candidate Alfredo Lim removed the word "kinse" from one of Napoleon Brandy's billboards last Tuesday, saying it is "offensive" to women and children. He said the billboard contained derogatory statements that "offend decency and good customs and is considered a crime against public morals."

Monsters on the loose. Detectives on the run.



Actor Jim Carrey digs into painful memories for role

LOS ANGELES—Jim Carrey says he couldn't have played the lead role in "Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind" if he hadn't been through some painful relationships.

In the movie, Carrey's character tries to have memories of his girlfriend (Kate Winslet) erased after she's had him wiped from her mind.

The 42-year-old actor, twice divorced, says he dug into his own experiences to star in the film.

"I couldn't really have done it if I hadn't been through a lot. One way or the other. Either you're the one erasing or you're the one being erased, so it's not a pleasant feeling," he said.

When asked if there's a relationship he'd erase from his memory, Carrey said, "I would never tell you. Oh, that would entail me opening up the most crucial intimacy of my life and I can't do that." AP

Arquette, Macy in made-for-TV Sinatra movie

NEW YORK—"Stealing Sinatra," a made-for-TV movie starring David Arquette, William H. Macy and Thomas Ian Nicholas as Frank Sinatra Jr., will premiere on April 25.

The Showtime original film is based on trial transcripts and various public documents on the 1963 kidnapping of Sinatra, the only son of Frank Sinatra, the cable channel said Monday.

Frank Sinatra Jr. was kidnapped Dec. 8, 1963, from Harrah's Casino in Lake Tahoe, Nevada, and held for ransom. The ransom was paid, he was safely released and the kidnappers were caught and convicted. AP



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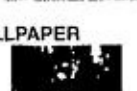
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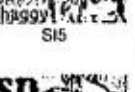
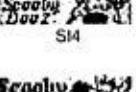
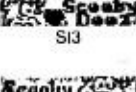
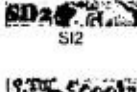
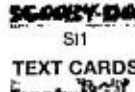
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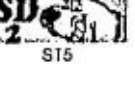
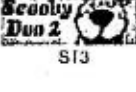
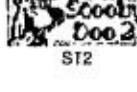
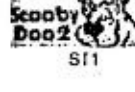
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ENTERTAINMENT

Old film classics return

By Constantino C. Tejero

CULTURAL heroes who have never been properly recognized are the Society of Film Archivists. It is a gargantuan task these people have taken upon themselves to preserve the film heritage of the country.

For lack of national audiovisual archives, the group has to do it on its own and act fast, with assistance from the National Commission for Culture and the Arts, and in cooperation with institutions such as the Philippine Information Agency and the Cultural Center of the Philippines.

Retrieval and restoration of a single long-lost film take considerable time, money and effort, and the reward comes only when the result is presented to an appreciative audience. The NCCA, through its Cinema Values Reorientation Program, has found a showcase for these old classics in the film festival Pelikula at Lipunan.

Now on its 11th edition, the film fest, presented by the NCCA in cooperation with Mowelfund Film Institute, opened on Feb. 11 at SM Megamall in Mandaluyong City, then proceeded to Iloilo and Baguio. It is now on its final legs in Cebu (March 19-20) and Davao (April 23-24).

True to its mission, Pelikula at Lipunan is showing five of those endangered classics, three of which we thought were already extinct: Eduardo de Castro's "Zamboanga" (1936); Manuel Conde's "Krus na Kawayan" (1956); Lamberto Avellana, Eddie Romero and Gerry de Leon's "Tagumpay ng Mahirap" (1965).



'Krus na Kawayan,' an endangered classic

The two others are Lino Brocka's "Tinimbang Ka Ngunit Kulang" (1974) and Romero's "Banta ng Kahapon" (1977). Brocka's film was retrieved from the British Film Institute almost 10 years ago and has been shown in several special screenings since. Romero's was a popular film when we saw it on its commercial run, so it never crossed our mind it would need restoration in so short a time.

But how important are these films? How do they fare after all these years? Is their quality as cinematic art worth the cost of their retrieval and restoration? And is there enough audience for them? In short, is it worth the trouble?

Except for De Castro, all makers of these films had been proclaimed National Artists since. And at least one of the films is a confirmed masterpiece.

Moro-moro and zarzuela

Understandably, the biggest hype has been heaped on "Zamboanga," as it is thought to be the oldest extant Philippine-made movie, plus it stars the juvenile Fernando Poe Sr. and the budding beauty Rosa del Rosario.

Filed by an American mestizo, it melds documentary and narrative to portray a remote culture of a strange people in an exotic clime. It belongs to that 1920s genre, the ethnographic film, typified by Robert Flaherty's "Nanook of the North" and "Moana" and F.W. Murnau's "Tabu—A Story of the South Seas."

This lost classic was rediscovered in the archive of the US Library of Congress by Pelikula at Lipunan festival director Nick Deocampo, himself an accomplished filmmaker and insightful film historian.

What comes to us is pageantry which earned the praises of Hollywood luminaries the likes of Frank Capra, Erich von Stroheim and Ernst Lubitsch. The print shown at the film fest has a babel of dialogue in Tausug with English and Finnish subtitles—one can only imagine the film's global reach before the war.

But then it has dated much. De Castro is not a particularly outstanding filmmaker, or we would have heard more from him. True, the underwater photography was impressive at that time, otherwise the camerawork is basic. This is a classic example of the moro-moro sensibility that

suffused early Philippine cinema.

Meanwhile, "Krus na Kawayan" alienates a younger audience with its 1950s anti-communist rhetoric, zarzuela type of acting and speech pattern, and depiction of Vietnamese history and culture by Tagalog-speaking actors. The film looks handsome, but obviously this is no "Genghis Khan."

Conde, who plays a Vietnamese military officer as a Christ figure, internalizes effectively but is embarrassing when he spouts Christian platitudes while clutching a bamboo crucifix to his breast. Aida Cariño's performance is often annoying, even for a psychotic cadre. (One suspects she is carrying over the Sisa rôle she made famous from De Leon's "Noli Me Tangere.")

Neorealism, melodrama

A more mature film is "Tagumpay ng Mahirap," understandably, as it was made a decade later when film technology and technique had advanced, and it is a product of the joint forces of three future National Artists.

This is the film biography of President Diosdado Macapagal, divided into three parts, each a complete short film: "The Boy," by Avellana; "The Man," by Romero; and "The President," by De Leon.

Each part has a differentiated look and spirit, bespeaking the strong personality of each filmmaker. De Leon's episode looks particularly different, as it is darker in tone and strong on chiaroscuro, with sharp images composed with bright light and solid shadows. (courtesy of cinematographer Mike Accion.)

The first part is gritty melodrama,



BROCKA: Filmmaker as activist

with a dusty or clayey atmosphere. The second is neorealist in look, with naturalistic acting (especially by Robert Arevalo and Barbara Perez). The third is formalist in composition, with somewhat stagey performances (by Fred Montilla and Cynthia Ugalde). As biopic goes, it is standard, in praise of the subject.

This was the film, together with De Leon's "Ang Daigdig ng Mga Api," used by the Macapagal reelection campaign to countenance Ferdinand Marcos' biopic propaganda "Iginuhit ng Tadhana." Marcos won the presidency, but the Macapagal films remain the winners.

We applaud the people responsible for the retrieval and restoration of these old classics. Film critics may be unhappy with them, and a generation of moviegoers weaned on cybertechnology and MTV may be left cold, but these films are priceless, definitely invaluable to film scholars.

True lovers of cinema celebrate. They would have hugged the screen if they had arms wide enough.

Capacity to delight

IN THE movies, just like in the business world, you've got to have a Unique Selling Proposition to stand out and really make it. Thus, in "Sleepless in Seattle," the most popular romantic comedy movie produced in the past 10 years, the radio romance between Tom Hanks and Meg Ryan disarmed many viewers.

Since then, numerous films have been made in a determined effort to come up with another big audience-pleaser, but only in a few romantic comedies have had a similarly effective USP or "hook," and capacity to delight.

The latest audience-charmer is the current film, "50 First Dates," top-billing Adam Sandler and Drew Barrymore. The lighthearted movie's unique hook is the fact that its female protagonist (Barrymore) suffers from short-term memory loss, the result of a car accident that jiggled her brain

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre



something fierce, causing her to forget anything that's happened to her after one day.

Thus, when Sandler falls for Barrymore in a big way, she reciprocates his love—but only for 24 hours. The following day, she's completely forgotten that she's even met him, and he has to start wooing her all over again!

You can imagine how frustrated—and exhausted—Sandler's character feels after a while. Lesser men would just give up and find a less forgetful girl to love!

But Sandler is made of more sterling

romantic stuff, so he plays for keeps, even when Barrymore breaks up with him to save him from a lifetime of constant frustration.

Of course, Sandler refuses to take the easy way out, and ultimately captures his forgetful beloved's heart for keeps. Not because she gets over her mental condition but her heart learns to remember what her mind forgets. Aw, gee!

Yes, it's that kind of illogical, so-in-love denouement, but that seems to be okay with most viewers, who embrace this movie's determinedly roscate view of love and life with romantic relish.

Another plus point is the fact that Sandler plays a veterinarian at a zoo, so a number of cute and smart animals charm the socks of viewers with their droll antics.

Also appealing are the cast's antic

performances, including some far-out cameo capers turned in by Fil-Am talent Rob Schneider, a character actress who plays Sandler's "manly" zoo associate, a mature actress who is cast as the owner of a diner, and the old curmudgeon who is her most caustic customer.

On the debit side, too much is made of Barrymore's family's elaborate scheme to prevent her from finding out that her memory has been so drastically abridged. The scheme is quite complicated, but it ends up confounding viewers, rather than impressing them.

Still, "50 First Dates" remains generally viewable, and even occasionally delightful. It charms with its unusual tale about the vagaries of the mind—and the steadfastness of the loving heart.

Feedback

FROM Paul R. Mortel: "I suggest that one of the many theaters in malls show vintage Tagalog movies like 'Bondying,' 'Waray-Waray,' 'Anak Dalita,' 'Siete Infantes de Lara,' 'Ikaw Kasi'—in other words, old Sampaguita, LVN and Premiere movies from the '50s and '60s."

"I think there is a ready market for this type of vintage movie fare!"

Perry joins 'The West Wing'

"FRIENDS" star Matthew Perry tackles his first high-profile dramatic role in Studio 23's "The West Wing" in a two-episode appearance starting on March 28 and ending on April 4.

Perry plays a young lawyer applying for a position as special White House counsel who may or may not be hiding something from the Bartlet leadership.

Next Base free concert

SHOW TIME

TOP acoustic and R&B performers, including Kyla, Aaliyah Parcs, U-Turn, and Devotion among others, star in a free concert tonight, March 26, at The Fort at the Global City in Taguig.

Through the free show, Techpoint Enterprise formally launches Next Base audio and video products. Techpoint is the sole Philippine distributor of Next Base products.

The Next Base home theater system and the world's first tablet-style DVD player, SDV 17-A or the Walking Cinema, have been in the Philippine market for sometime now, available mainly at SM malls.

The Next Base Walking Cinema is very handy. It has a 7-inch true-color screen that

produces crisp and sharp images making it an entertainment necessity at home, in the office, even in cars.

The free concert will start at 8 p.m. It is directed by Eugene Asis, with Noel Orsal as production manager.

Capping the event is a raffle, where a lucky member of the audience will win a Next Base DVD player. To join the raffle concertgoers must drop their calling cards or a piece of paper with their names, addresses and contact numbers in a glass bowl at the venue entrance.

The Next Base show is supported by Gadget Magazine, Pier One Restaurant and Bar, and radio partner 88.3 Jam.

Kapampangan album launched

MON David, the musician, songwriter, record producer, consummate jazz singer and balladeer, takes a detour from his multi-faceted career and rediscovers his Kapampangan musical roots via "ABE MU KU"—a compilation of Kapampangan love songs, traditional folk tunes and his original compositions.

The album will be formally launched on March 28 at the Holy Angel University Center for Kapampangan Studies through the cooperation of Multi-Directional Music Productions, with the ARTI STA. RITA theater group as special guest.

Fresh from a natural high after the 7th KATHA honored his self-produced album 'Soulitude' with five major awards in various categories, Mon continues to embrace eclectic forms this time with a 'homecoming feeling' and renews his sense of identity as a Kapampangan artist.

Included in the album are songs he recorded in "Pamalsinta Quetang Milabas," (Himno ning Kapampangan, Malagun Kakung Palsintan and ARO! Katimyas na Nintang Dalaga), a groundbreaking album by the Sapni ng Crissot Literary and Cultural Foundation a few years back. This inspired him to write songs in his native tongue—one of which is the title cut 'ABE MU KU' and the inspiring tribute to the inherent goodness and kindness of the Kapampangan, 'Kabalen, Tune Kang Malugud.'

His natural flair for vocal harmony and for creating different grooves and rhythms is showcased in his arrangement of the traditional folk tune 'ATIN KU PUNG SINGS-

ING,' where he dubbed his voice in ten tracks with a shaker and woodblocks.

Having been the official drummer and vocal coach of the APO Hiking Society for many years explains the ease and confidence he exudes when he does these experiments in the recording studio.

The compilation also features songs he recorded with ARTISTS RITA, the festive 'Masayang Kebaitan Keka'—a birthday tune he co-wrote with Andy Alviz, and the uplifting 'Kapampangan Ku,' also written by Alviz. The lineup is completed with two of Fr. Cris Cadiang's Christmas lullabies—"Benging Bana" and "King Tahimik A Kabengian."

"I hope to encourage and inspire our Kabalens and our friends from other regions to rediscover and preserve Kapampangan culture, music and values, and make it more accessible, especially to the younger generations," Mon points out.

The music chameleon that he is, Mon's relentless search for fresh ways to express his music is felt in all his performances, recordings and compositions. He believes that 'music should have no boundaries, like air that flows and passes through us all, for everyone to experience and enjoy... a personal philosophy that music's healing and uplifting power can be the best way of getting closer to God.'

Mon will also be performing with Richard Merk and Robert Seña in 'Three For The Road'—a tribute to Frank Sinatra, Tony Bennett and Sammy Davis Jr.—at Merk's Bar, Level III, Greenbelt 3, Ayala Center on April 22 & 29, and on May 6 & 13.

Ai-Ai delas Alas: Queen Mother

"I'D LIKE to become a stewardess."

That was Ai-Ai de las Alas speaking in a very noontime pageant princess manner to writer Adel Gabot of Mega Magazine for the feature "The Queen Mother."

Gabot got a taste of how it was like being in the presence of one of the biggest and most hilarious showbiz phenomenon of this generation.

"[Kaso] di naman ako maganda (But the problem is I'm not beautiful)," Ai-Ai continued.

This time, she made the terse observation about herself in her characteristic loudmouth manner.

"Eto (This)?" she framed her ample chin with her hand. "Tsugi beauty ko. Ini-snub ako ng Cathay at PAL (My beauty went down the drain. I was snubbed by Cathay and Pal)."

Royal chin

Who in the Philippines doesn't know her royal chin-ness?

With three regular TV shows and several guest appearances, Ai-Ai is a permanent fixture in television. Her launching movie, "Tanging Ina," was a self-fulfilled prophecy.

During one of her promotional interviews, she jokingly declared, "Ito po ang pelikulang makakatalo sa 'Spiderman (the movie)' (This is the movie that will beat 'Spiderman' at the box office)!"

True enough, the comic goddess with the obnoxiously colored shoes crushed the poor man-slash-arachnid at the local box office with a total gross of 200 million pesos in its entire run.

Today, Ai-Ai no longer steps on little critters. She drives a Jaguar to work and has a sizeable entourage that follows her around.

"I look rich, 'no?" she quipped in between takes of her Wig Tysmans pictorial.

"Mukha lang (I just look rich). I'm on my way there—if I were rich I would not work like this, kayod-kalabaw (like a beast of burden). Kayod pang-tao na lang (I'll work just like a human being)."

Beastly labor hardly describes Ai-Ai's climb up the ladder of success. Boy Abunda, the talent manager who she fondly calls Ama, attests to her journey.

"Success didn't come easy for Aileen," he told MEGA. "She paid for it with a lot of hard work, tears, love, laughter and passion—to this day she continues to do so."

Multi-million level

Ai-Ai used to be a Cultural Center clerk, a KTV emcee, a Foreign Affairs department trainee and a department store saleslady. Today, she still sells household commodities, but is in a totally different multi-million level. She endorses in commercials hotdogs, margarine, vinegar, electric fans, among other products.

Her mass appeal has also filled up concert venues like the Folk Arts Theatre and the Araneta Coliseum to the brim, earning for her the title, "Comedy

Concert Queen." She has won the approval of the overcritical movie press with three Star Awards under her belt. "Tanging Ina" made her the "Box Office Queen," or as Gabot refers to her, "National Mother Figure for the new millennium."

Of all the titles given to her, the last one must be the one she takes to heart.

"My time with my children is what's important to me. What am I going to do with my earnings if I'm not happy should they have low grades?"

She's the doting mother hen, who puts her chicks' welfare first. In one instance, she even threatened on national television to sue another comedienne because the latter's son bullied one of Ai-Ai's brood.

Downright vulgar

She's feisty, she's stubborn and sometimes, downright vulgar. When she did the opening stand-up act for the ABS-CBN's 50th anniversary show—with the who's who of television, advertising, multinational companies, government and even foreign dignitaries in attendance—she lashed out "chlorox breath" at her fellow gay comrades. It might have been just part of her comedy act. Or it could be a by-product of her not-so funny life, where she had to be tough to survive.

For more on Ai-Ai, check out the MEGA March 2004 issue, now in newstands.



Ai-Ai: Wannabe stewardess

Inday Badiday's colorful life in 'Mapagkailanman'

MY MOM'S colorful and inspiring life story will be featured in "Magpakailanman" sometime in April. I remember Ma having a show with exactly the same format called "True Confessions Ng Mga Bituin" in the '80s. It was her brainchild. So modesty aside, she not only pioneered the show biz talk show trend, but also the true-to-life genre.

I recall teasing Ma that her biography should be featured in "Magpakailanman." She told me that one episode is not enough to cover her entire story.

Angelu de Leon will portray my mom in the episode. With Angelu's acting prowess, I'm sure she'll do justice to the role. Besides, there was also a time when Angelu confided to Ma her innermost secrets so her closeness to my mom will definitely inspire Angelu to give her all.

My brother Ricky, sister Clara and I were interviewed by Tita Mel Tiangco for the "interaction" segment of the show. It was shot by the sea in Talisay, Batangas. It brought back so many warm memories of the Sundays that we had spent with our mom at our Cavite beach house. Ma considered it as her refuge.

The staff noticed that during the "interaction," it suddenly became very windy. The strong winds subsided only after the interview. They were unanimous in saying that the powerful winds were my Mom's way of making her presence felt. She truly lives on in Clara, Ricky and myself. There is a little piece of Ma in each of us.

I would rather not preempt the show, but my mom's life story will pierce you where it matters most. Her book may have ended, but her story continues to unravel in the

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Ann Carvajal



lives that she had changed and hearts that she had moved.

Latest beau

IS Marc Escueta of Rivermaya the latest beau of **Danica Sotto**? She has split up with **Boy2 Quizon** after her cousin **Mico Sotto** died. After a long talk, they decided to call it quits. Has Marc replaced Boy2 in Danica's heart? Perhaps, she's tired of comedians so she's shifting to musicians. After all, she's still too young. It's best to have "one of each kind" while you're still young and carefree than when

you're old and restless!

No timeout

VINCE Hizon and Bong Alvarez are the first Filipino cagers who have been tapped to play for the United States Basketball League. Vince will be flying to Pennsylvania with his lovely wife **Shaan** and will be based there for about three months.

The newlyweds claim that they have never ever had a single fight nor argument. "We don't know what it feels like to have *tampuhan* and *sumbatans*," Shaan reveals.

It's probably because their friendship is just as solid as their love. They even play basketball together like Shaan is one of the boys. The couple is in the process of building their house. Vince says, "Before we had the rooms and kitchen made I made sure the basketball court was done. First

things first!"

With their perfect teamwork, the Hizons will definitely have no timeout in their romance.

Pido's music

LONG before the acoustic scene started to peak, **Pido** has been at it for years. He's not one who needs to follow a craze just to be "in." He used to be play with Artstart, and now he performs with his band, **Take One**. Artists have come and gone, and acoustic singers have become a dime a dozen these days. But Pido's music has remained steady. In his own quite way, Pido has created a niche for himself in the music industry. Catch him perform at **Friends El Pueblo/Tapika** (alternate Mondays), **Bagaberde** (Tuesdays) and at **Dish** (Fridays).

Circle of 10

JOIN the search for the country's

most refreshing faces and become a member of the **Circle of 10 models 2004**.

Contestants should be single, aged between 15 to 19, at least 5-foot-4 for girls, and 5-foot-6 for boys, articulate in English and Tagalog, and living in the country. They must have no previous experience in commercial modeling and acting for TV shows and movies. Screening dates are until tomorrow, 1 p.m., at the 10th Floor office of Universal Records Tower, 1487 Quezon Avenue (beside Parco Supermart), West Triangle, Quezon City.

Please bring 4R size colored close-up and whole body picture. For inquiries call 374-7511 or 374-7512, and look for Eya.

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ENTERTAINMENT

Kuh's sanctuary underneath the stars

By Remy M. Umerez
Contributor

IF YOU don't hear much from Kuh Ledesma, there's nothing to worry about. She is not in hiding from the public eye even if she has found a sanctuary in the pollution-free city of Tagaytay where she has a hacienda named after her 19-year-old daughter, Isabella.

Finding the place is like look-

ing for a pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. It won't be easy for the first-time visitor to locate the hacienda. But it's worth the trip.

Another first

Kuh welcomes us at the gate with Isabella and a talent she is now managing named Rebekah.

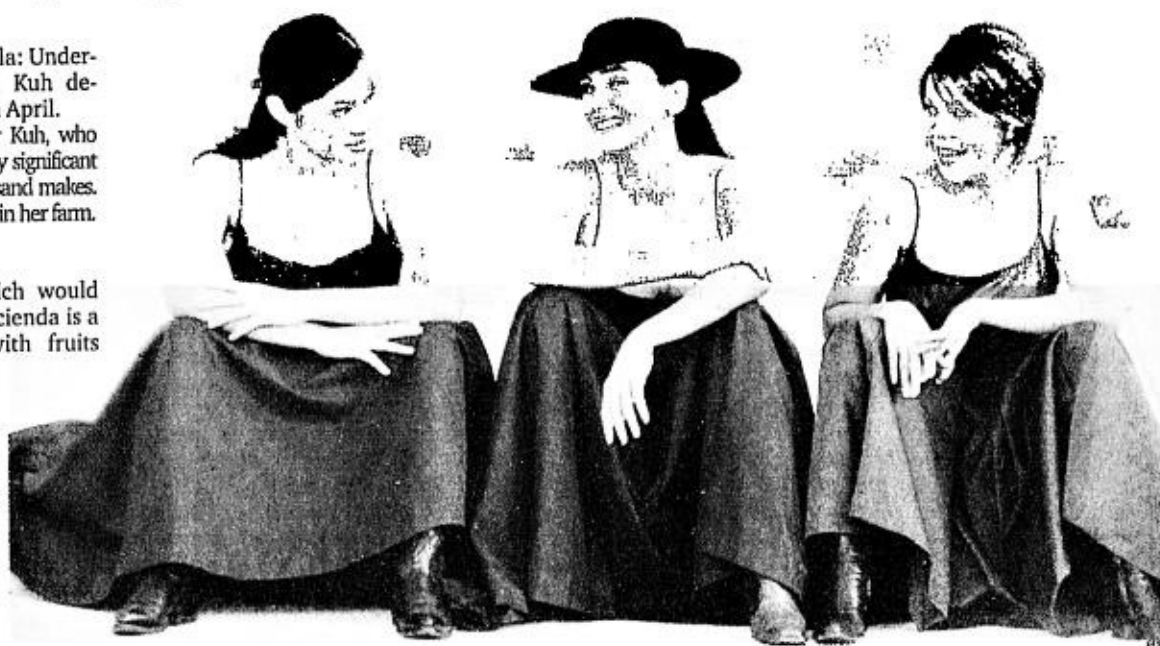
The press gathering was to announce a dinner show on April 3 at the hacienda. The show is

called "Hacienda Isabella: Underneath the Stars," and Kuh describes it as Valentine in April.

This is another first for Kuh, who seems to be following every significant move her idol Barbra Streisand makes. Barbra once held a concert in her farm.

Scent of jackfruits

The first sight, which would greet visitors of the hacienda is a *nangka* tree laden with fruits



ISABELLE, Kuh's daughter, with the Diva and Rebekah

wrapped in sacks.

"There are about 80 jackfruits in the farm, which I retained. What were chopped off were the coffee trees. Jackfruits have a nice smell, especially when they are ripening. We mix them in our green salads. They are one of the most expensive local fruits we have, and one of my favorites. *Pero sa sobrang pamumunga*, we give the fruits away to friends. We are starting to plant basil and other leafy vegetables in the garden.

I want everything fresh when we serve them," Kuh says.

The four-hectare property was discovered by Kuh's brother seven years ago. But she almost sold it at one point.

"It remained idle for quite a long period. I thought of selling it because it was idle. No one was taking care of it because I seldom come here. For one reason or another, we did not push through with the sale. Looking back, I think God has a purpose that's why the sale didn't push through. God has a hand in everything we do," she explains.

Kuh visits the hacienda three times a week. She never runs out of ideas not only in beautifying it, but in making it a major tourist attraction in Tagaytay after the Taal Volcano.

Tourist attraction

Sounding like Dick Gordon, Kuh says: "Tagaytay makes a good substitute for Baguio because of the cool weather. Going to Baguio has become an ordeal due to heavy traffic. A lot of time is wasted on the road. This is a perfect get-away. Apa Ongpin's wedding took place here, and it was one of the most beautiful and most solemn weddings that I have ever witnessed. We had about 300 guests, and could have accommodated more. The beauty of it is that you can see a lot of stars, which makes the affair romantic."

A Christian convert and a Bible reader, Kuh is also offering the place as a house of prayer or as a retreat house for people who want to be with the Lord. A dwelling house is being constructed for people who want to spend their weekends at the hacienda. Everything she undertakes, Kuh is offering for the glory of God.

Surprise party

The vast hacienda, which has a goose roaming around, could have been a perfect venue for a birthday party for the Barbra-born diva. By her own admission, Kuh loathes

surprise parties, saying that the last *asalto* she had was 18 years ago.

Isabella shares her story of the surprise party.

"We pulled one with the help of my *ninang* Precy (Florentino). In the past, Mom always smelled that we were up to something. So we made sure she wouldn't be on to us that time. It must have been God's will that she did not suspect anything at all. We gathered some of her closest friends way back in grade school and college. When we treated her out, she thought we would just go shopping and then eat out. She was surprised all right (with the party), and I think we made her happy."

Dinner at the hacienda for the media gathering consisted of green salads of every kind of lettuce you could imagine. Jackfruit and mango strips with cheese and dressing made the salads a tasty treat.

For the main course, pasta with tomato and tuna, and broiled chicken were served with white wine. Soft drinks of any kind is out. Lemonade is in. For dessert, a scoop of ice cream was laid on a chico fruit cut like a cup. There was squash soup to begin the meal.

Kuh has long ceased being a carnivorous.

"When I stopped eating meat, I felt light when I woke up in the morning. But you know, you don't get nightmares after a heavy meal before sleeping. That is the scientific explanation. But the Bible says it is a result of not repenting from your sins."

If Brother Eddie Villanueva were around, the scene, with the dinner guests sitting on two wooden benches, would look like a tableau of the Last Supper.

Tickets to Kuh's show in Hacienda Isabella are at P2,000, P1,500, P1,000 (dinner included). For inquiries, please call Ticketworld Headline Concepts at 891-5610/891-9999/551-7251 to 55.



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KUH: Everything I do is for the glory of God.

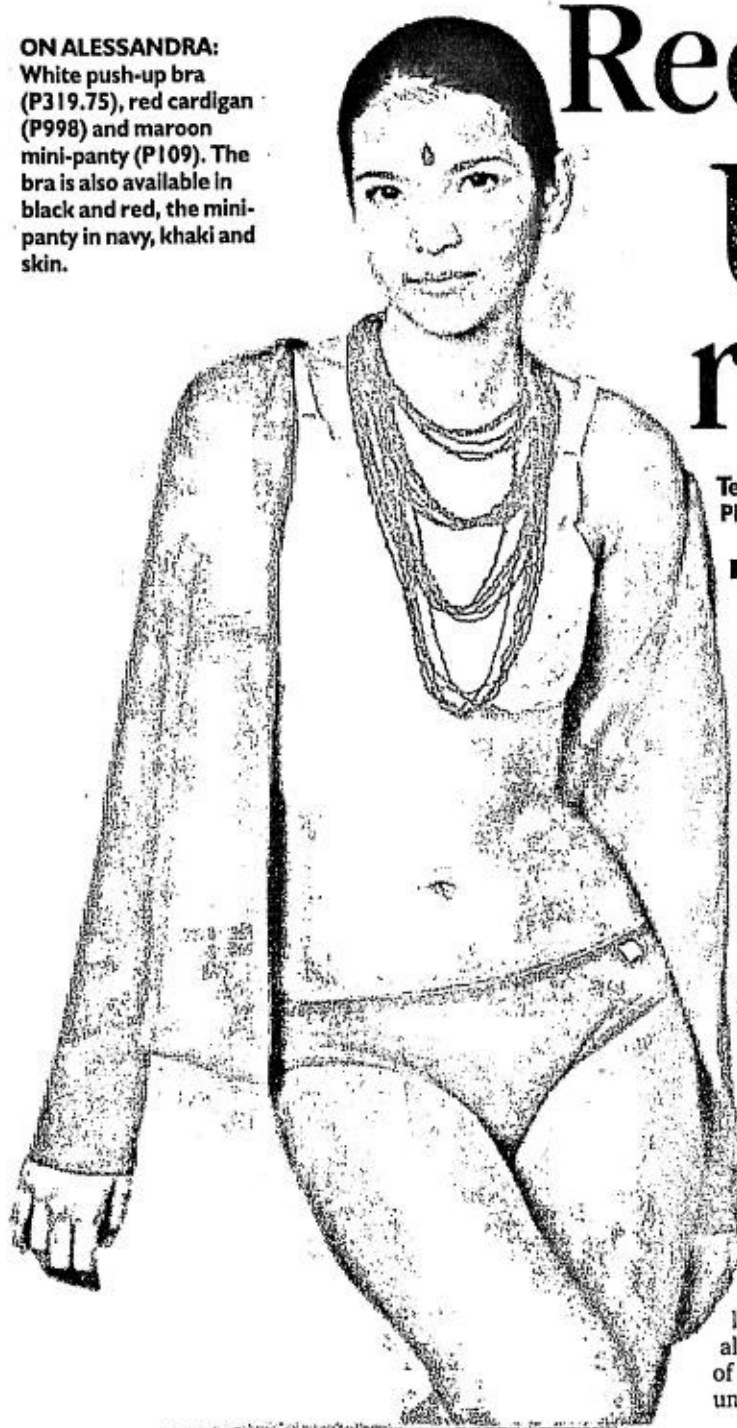
LIFESTYLE

Editor Chelo Banal-Formoso



MONDAY ARTS • TUESDAY FITNESS • WEDNESDAY 2BU • THURSDAY FOOD • FRIDAY FASHION/BEAUTY/HOME • SUNDAY SURPRISES

ON ALESSANDRA:
White push-up bra
(P319.75), red cardigan
(P998) and maroon
mini-panty (P109). The
bra is also available in
black and red, the mini-
panty in navy, khaki and
skin.



Red-hot undies revolution

Text by Gibbs Cadiz
Photos by Romy Homillada

TIME was when wearing red briefs was considered shocking among men. Real guys wore white or black. Anything else was gauche or, worse, effete.

"For a time, red underwear was seen as 'baduy,'" says Bryan Lim, general manager of Bench and head of the Bench Body undergarments line.

But his brand changed all that. By a combination of savvy marketing, quality output and the most gorgeous stable of models to hawk its merchandise, Bench made wearing red undies hip and hot.

"We basically made a fashion statement that red is fashionable," says Lim. "Our Red series has become very successful. Now we see Bikini Open contestants wearing red undies. Perhaps they feel lucky wearing the color. Red is also considered lucky in the Year of the Monkey—specifically red underwear."

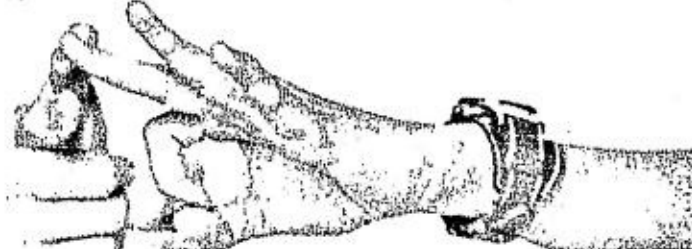
Wearing crimson undergarments brings good luck in the Year of the Monkey. Just ask Bench

That luck has held out for Bench, which is the first local brand to open shops in malls dedicated solely to undergarments. Bench Body now has 11 stores, and is branching out to other countries like China and the US.

"In China, we're becoming known both for our garments and undergarments lines. It has become our point of entry to other markets. In terms of quality, I can also say we're comparable to other global brands," says Lim.

Warm bodies

R&B singer Jay R and young actress Alessandra de Rossi cur-



BRYAN Lim, general manager of Bench and head of the Bench Body undergarments line

rently star in separate ad campaigns for Bench Body. But for this exclusive INQUIRER pictorial, they get to work together for the first time, creating an interesting combination of easy sensuality and youthful spitfire beauty, highlighted all the more by Bench's new collection of boxer briefs, bras and bikinis in various shades of red and other colors.

"We got Jay R and Alex [Alessandra's nickname] because they're very well-representative of the Bench brand," explains Lim. "Jay R is hot right now, he's from the US but he speaks Tagalog and is very Pinoy,

while Alex is a talented young actress, sexy and wholesome but with a strong character and attitude.

"Always, when we get models for Bench, we want to impart the idea that we literally cater to all segments of the market, from the conservative to the daring to the fashion-forward. That's reflected in our choice of models, from Jomari [Yllana] and Assunta de Rossi to Jon Hall and Marc Nelson, and now to Jay R and Alex," Lim adds.

The popularity of Bench undergarments may also lie in their

RED-HOT/D2



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Biglaan
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The Gift

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Five for Fighting
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Aliya Parcs
Sheryn Regis
Outkast
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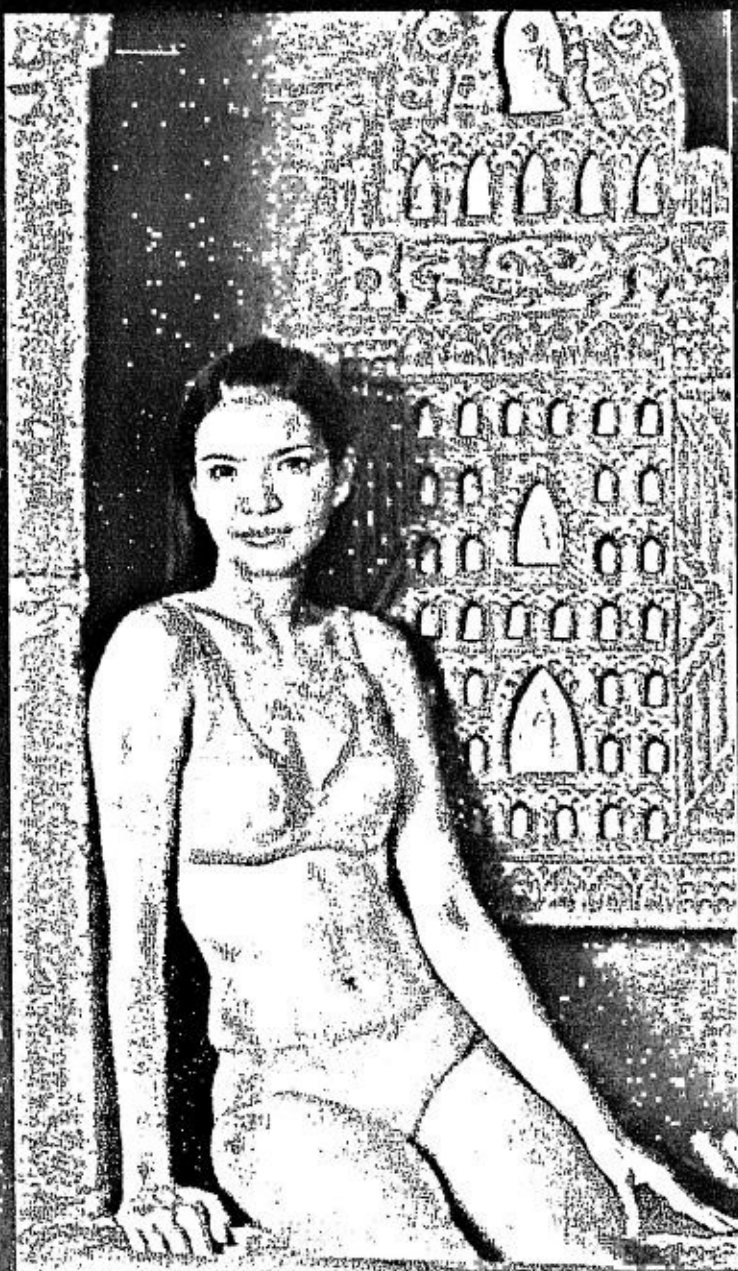


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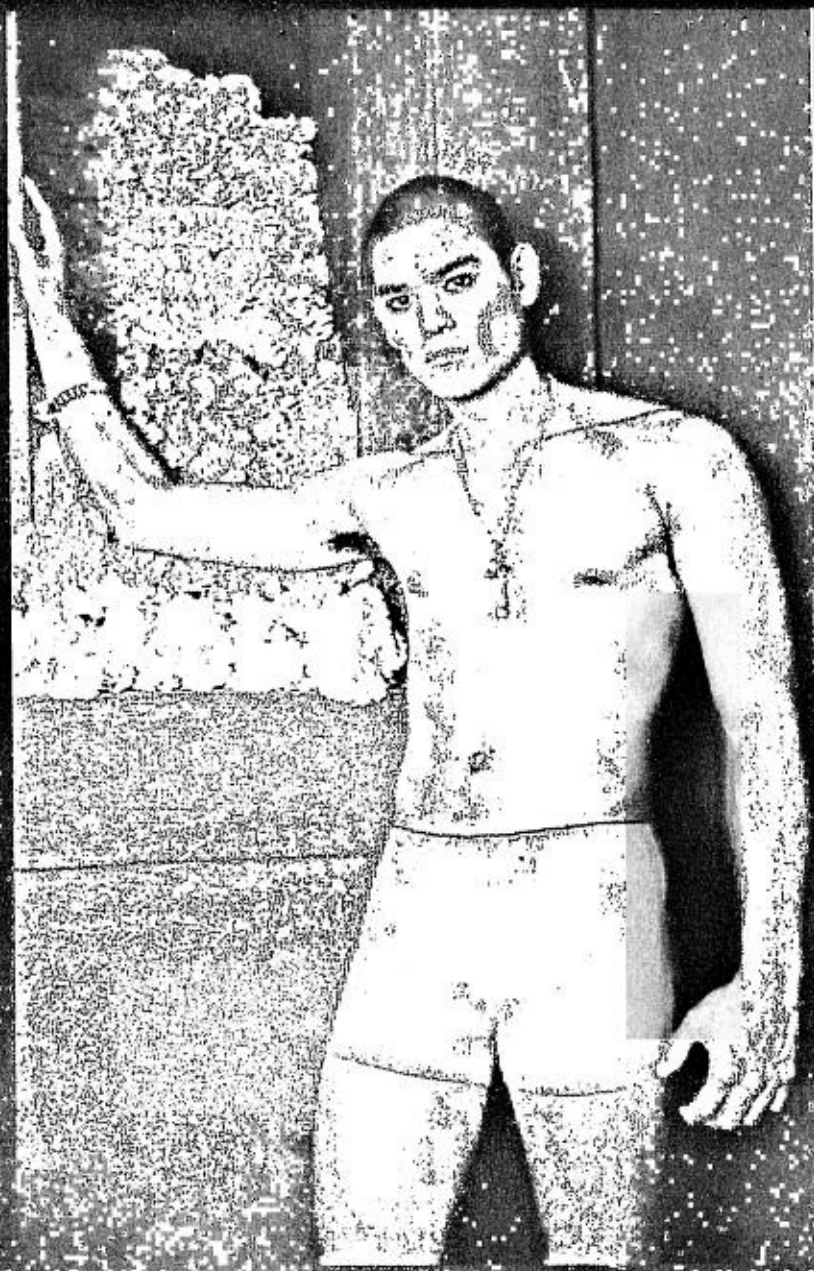


Primo until March 31, 2004. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0399, Series of 2004

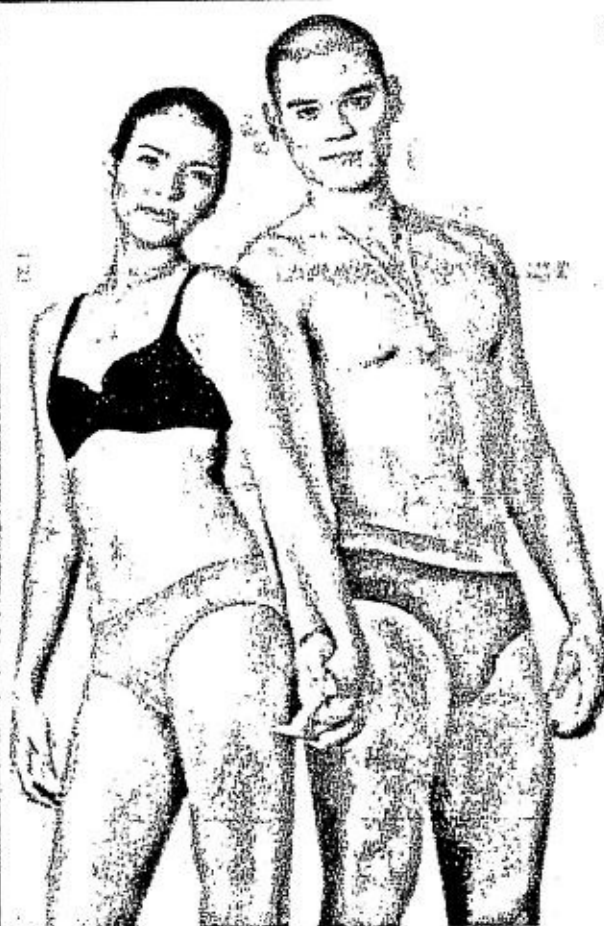
ON ALESSANDRA:
Red push-up bra
(P19.75) and hi-cut
panty (P119)



ON JAY R: Boxer
brief inband with
woven label on the
side (P239)



Red-hot undies revolution



ON HER: Denim bra (P279.75) and red low-rise hipster brief (P119.75). **On him:** Black hipster brief with repeated logo on waistband (P139)

From page D1

quality and hip factor. Lim says they always try to stay ahead of the curve when it comes to design and materials.

"We keep abreast of the trends, like last year, when we had denim-like undies. It was actually cotton, still very comfortable, but it looked like denim, which was the rage at the time. We also had mesh, and then there was the gray garments collection worn by Jerry Yan."

Bashful

Jay R, still quite bashful despite his sudden fame, says he was really happy when he was asked to model for Bench, though he feels embarrassed about baring every time.

"Tingin ko payat ako, eh. I only get to work out once a month, so I really need to start eating a lot and working out. But everything's okay, I get free clothes, which is a big thing, and I'm very thankful for the exposure. Bench is huge," he says.

The fiery Alessandra, known for her kinetic per-

sonality and motormouth wit, was in her element pouring into one sleeky Bench lingerie after another.

"This is fun, pero medyo embarrassing rin sometimes. It's my first sexy pictorial na may kasama akong guy, kaya medyo nahihiya ako."

Mortified or not, she cracked up the pictorial with a steady stream of zany one-liners. Posing against what looked like an Indian bas-relief (actually Vietnamese), she quipped, "Buti pa si Assunta, nakapunta ng India, ako hanggang pictorial lang."

Asked to pose upright in bikinis with Jay R sprawled and leaning against her left leg, she shrieked, turned to the guy and said, "Uy, diyan ka lang ha, 'wag kang haharap o lilingon."

Jay R, trying to make her feel at ease, said, "Puwede isang kamay mo nasa ulo ko?"

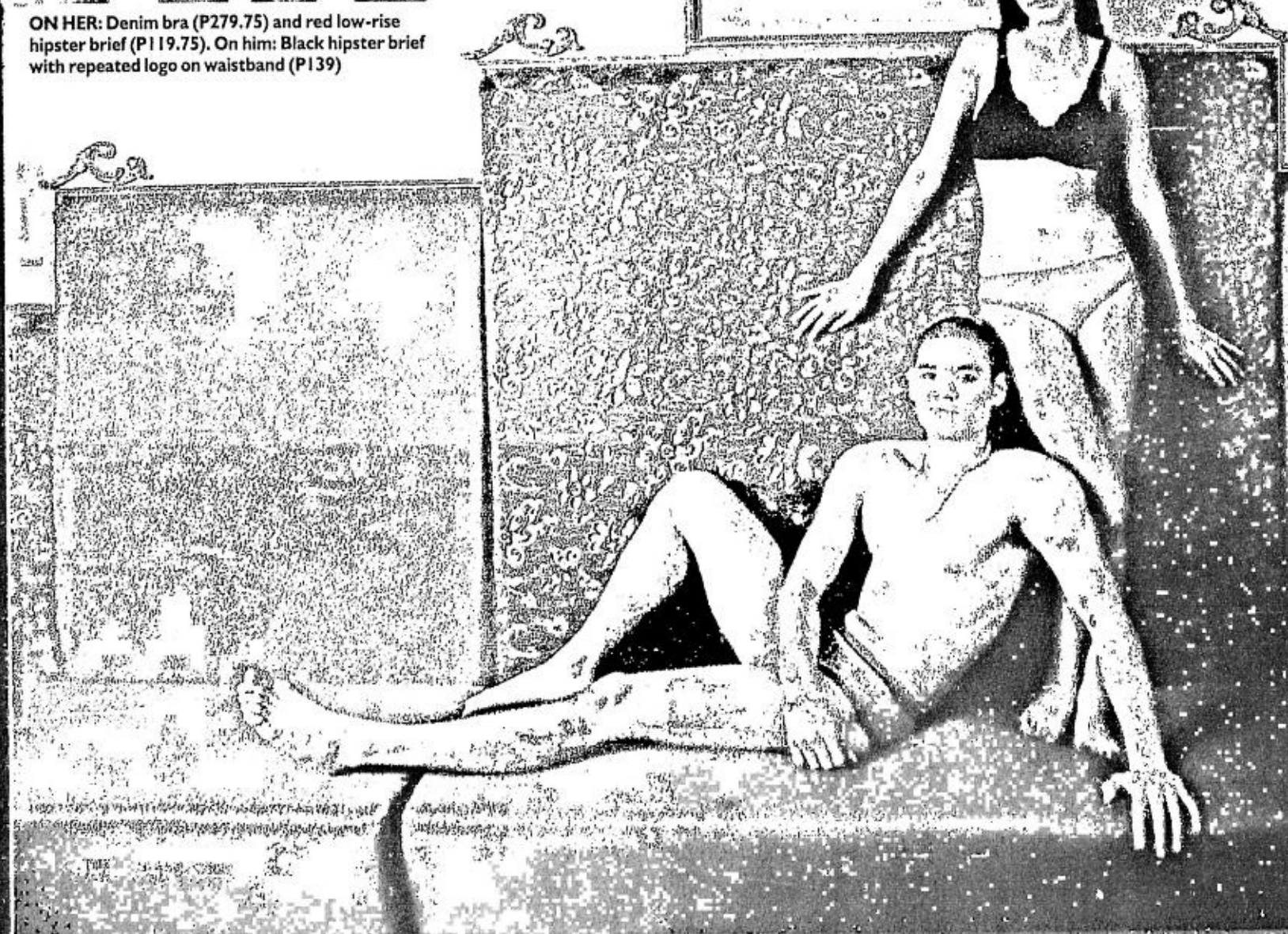
"Aaaay! Isang paa, gusto mo?"

Clearly, this is sexiness with a scorching, devil-may-care attitude. Very much like undies in unapologetic red.

E-mail the author at gcadz@inquirer.com.ph



ON HIM: Red hipster brief with repeated logo on waistband (P139)



ON HIM: Gray hipster brief with red piping (P169.75). **On her:** Black push-up bra (P319.75) and red hi-cut panty (P119)

MODELS: Jay R and Alessandra de Mesa
STYLING: Sherry Lim
HAIR: Kim Lim
MAKEUP: Kim Lim
LOCATIONS: Manila, Philippines

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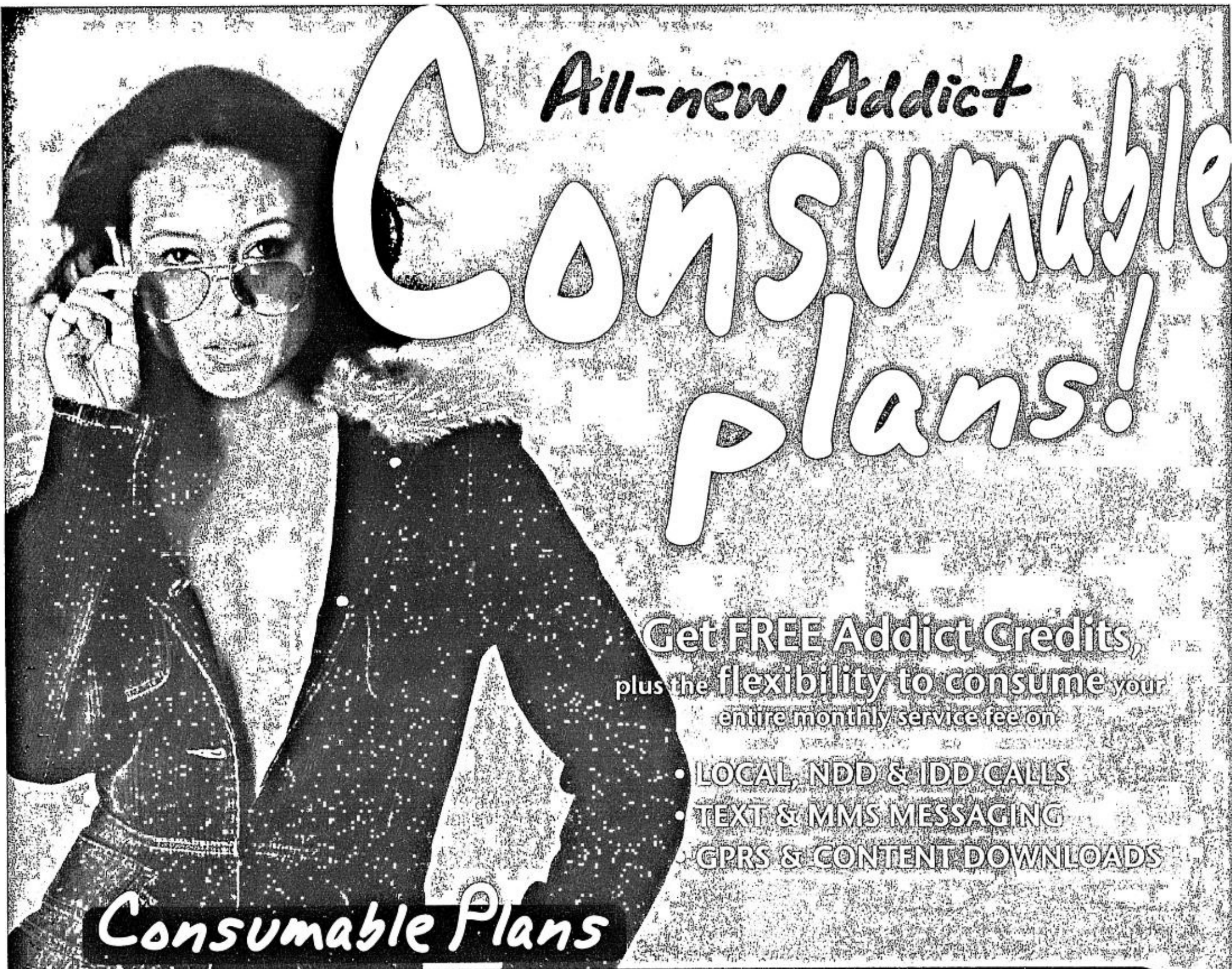
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LIFESTYLE



10 wardrobe musts for the long hot summer

PUTTING together your wardrobe can be an exhilarating experience. Not in a long while has fashion been this feminine, pretty and vibrant.

The wealth of choices are inspiring, though sometimes overwhelming. But by keeping a few simple tips in mind, you can easily choose your pieces and edit out those you don't need.

Building a capsule wardrobe is one sure way of getting value for your money because you maximize the use of every article of clothing you purchase. To do this, you simply have to make sure that the pieces you choose can be mixed and matched and have complementary colors.

For summer, it's advantageous to invest in light-colored clothes such as khaki or white, which do not attract heat or light (unlike dark hues like black or navy) but reflect it instead.

It's also the perfect time to brighten up your wardrobe by investing in some attractive tutti-frutti-hued items like a lime polo shirt or lemon T-shirt.

Fabric is also an important consideration. Although it is relatively hot and humid in the Philippines all year round, it is wiser to choose clothing with breathable, more natural fabrics like linen and cotton for those scorching summer days.

Depending on your style, pick pieces that evoke romantic images of "Great Gatsby." Or create a proper lady-like appeal in retro 1950s fashion. Simple, chic and modern pieces are fuss-free and easy to match. Or better yet, why not mix up different looks to create your own eclectic style?

As always, consider your body type, skin tone and personality. Never follow trends unless they suit you, and make certain that you are comfortable in whatever you opt to wear.

Also, choose items that play up your strengths. For instance, wear a shorter skirt if you have great legs, or wear a sleeveless top if you have well-toned arms.

APPLES' PICKINGS



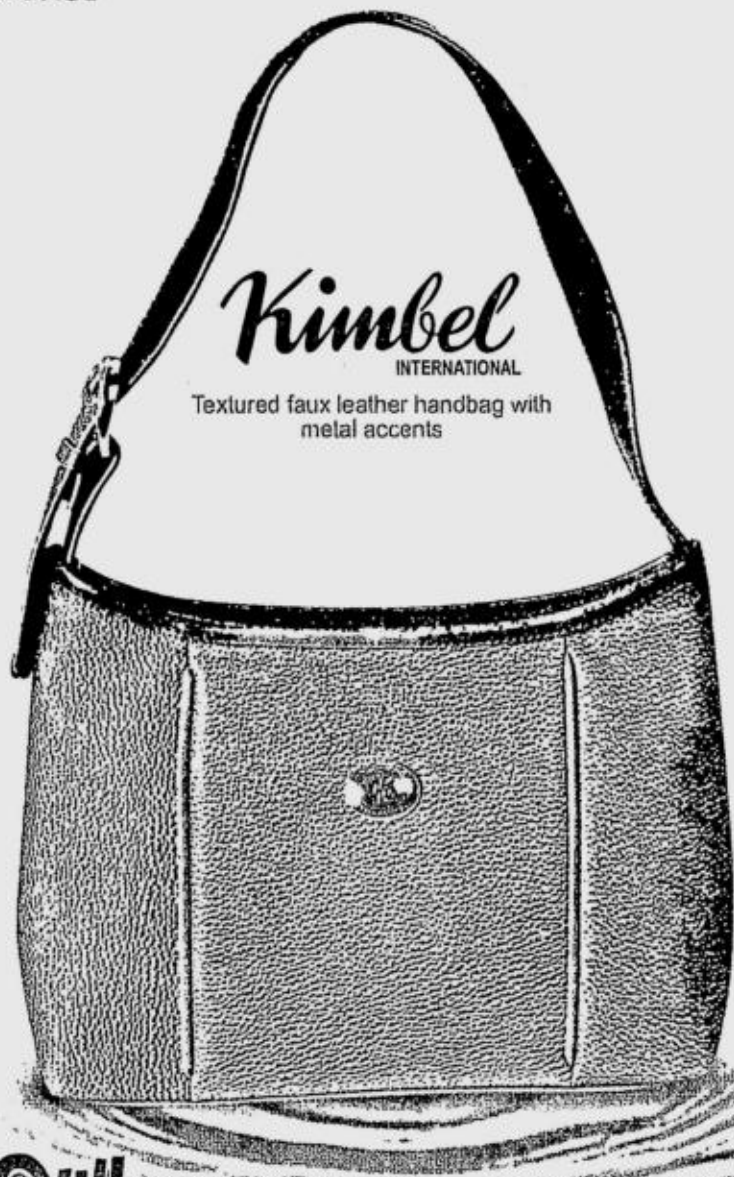
Apples Aberin-Sadhwani

Invest in light-colored clothes such as khaki or white, which do not attract heat or light

Photos by Randy Hormillosa

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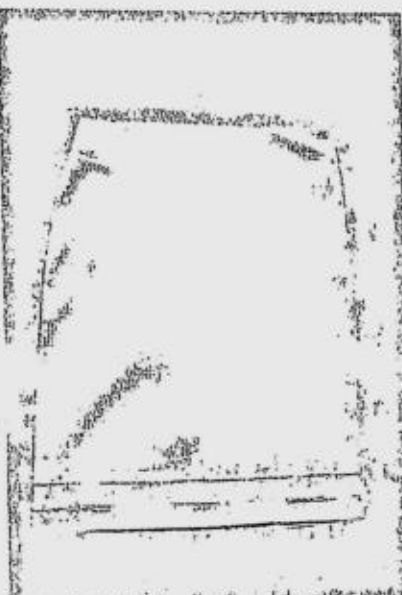
See flyers or visit www.myglobe.com.ph for more details. Promo period: Feb. 11 to Apr. 6, 2004. Per DTI-NCR Permit No. 0510, Series of 2004



1 PRINTED dress, Lounge Lizard



2 GREEN and white striped polo with sash, Kashieca



3 SAND linen skirt, Kashieca



4 APPLE green jersey top, Mango



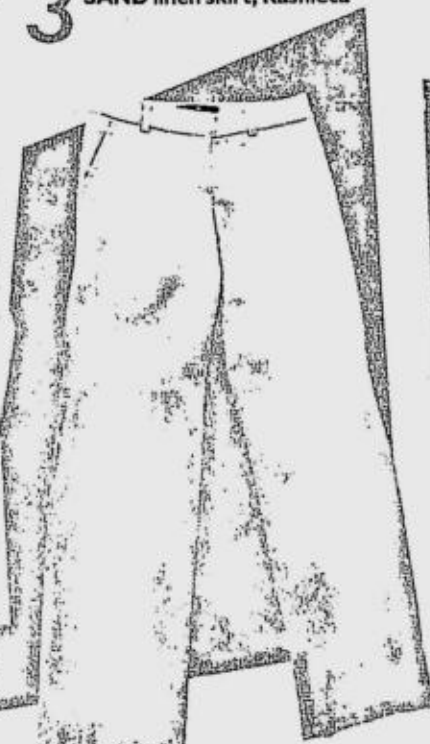
5 WHITE culottes, Tyler



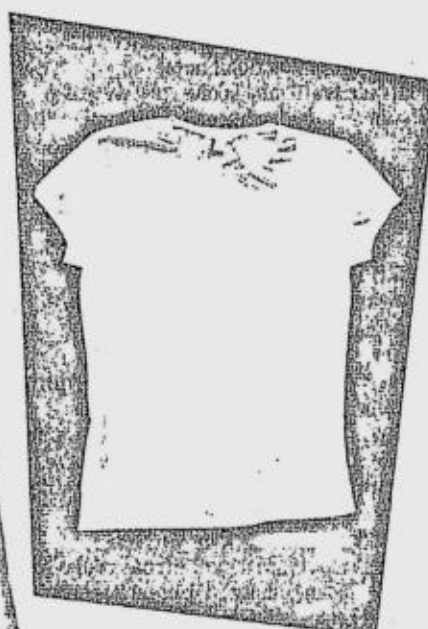
6 LEMON and lime seer sucker polo shirt, Kashieca



7 CREAM cardigan, Episode



8 KHAKI trousers, Tyler



9 CANARY yellow T-shirt, Mango



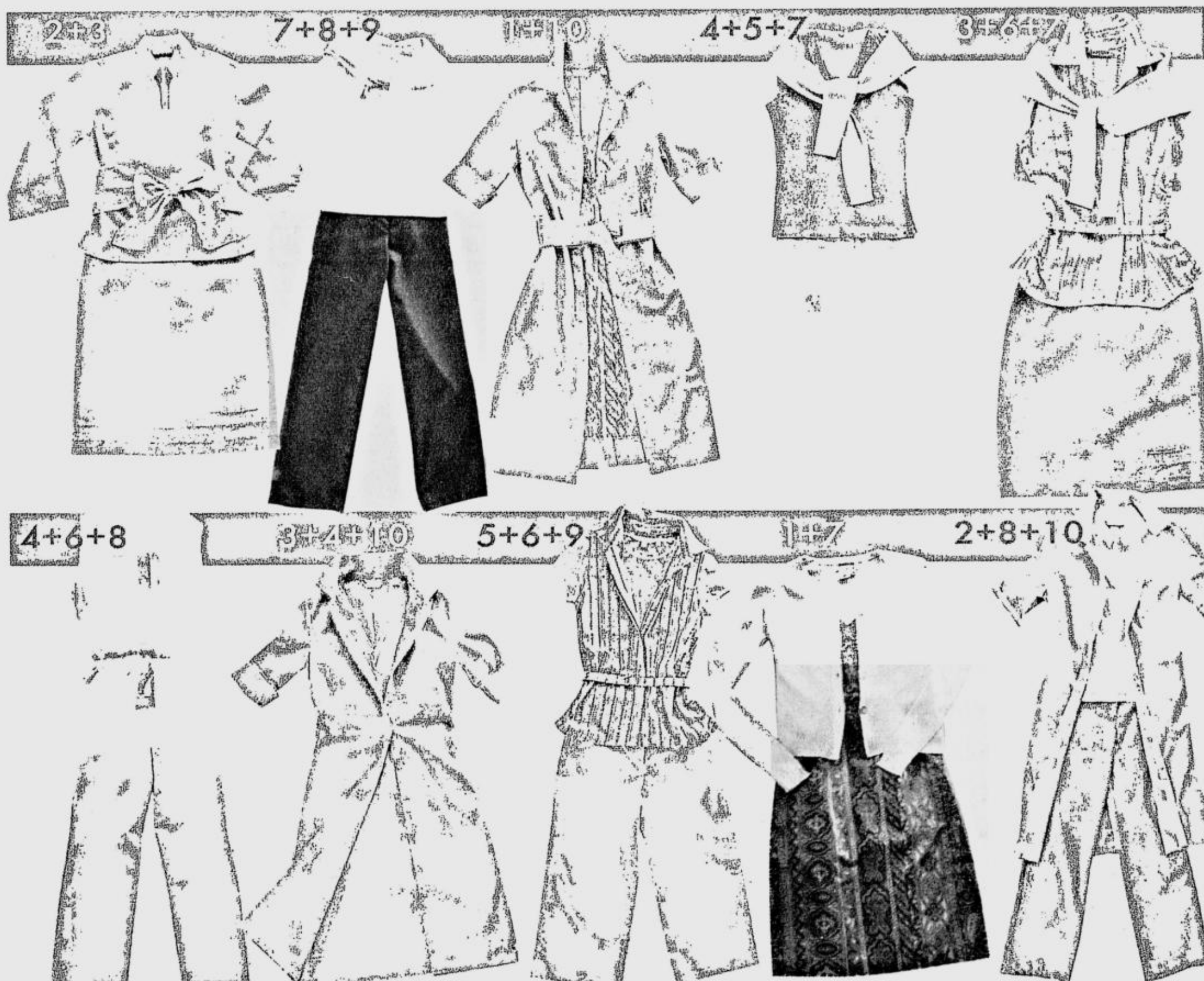
10 KHAKI short-sleeved coatdress, Mango

From page E1

10 wardrobe musts for the long hot summer

The season is a game of contrasts and tones. To build your wardrobe, mix and match, blend and harmonize, play and display. Here's how you do the fashion math:

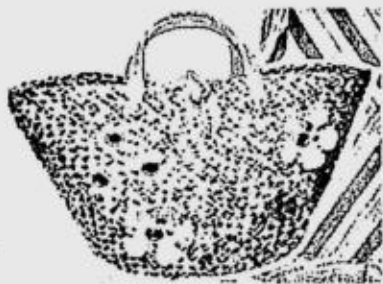
E-mail the author at apsadvice@hotmail.com



Native bags get summer updating

TRADITIONAL native bags get the sophisticated treatment with Alfa's summer collection of totes and bags. Young designer Jill Yaneza-Lema combines leather detailing with indigenous materials such as lupiz, abaca, jute and bancuan for bags that make style statements—on and off the beach.

Alfa, the Pinoy bag label, has stores at Robinsons Galleria Ortigas Center, Robinsons Place Ermita, Festival Mall Alabang and Fashion Square, Eastwood City, Libis.



LUPIZ tote with cow valnap floral appliques in magenta and fuchsia contrast and drawstring closure



SUMMER SASS. Bancuan basket tote with crisscross cow valnap trimming in magenta and deer tan contrast and leather tab closure, and basket tote of bancuan and cow valnap butterfly applique, with loop closure

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Imedeen has been voted the No. 1 beauty supplement in the UK by Boots customers. This accolade reflects both Imedeen's success as a leading 'internal' skincare brand and Imedeen's prominence within Boots as their top-selling beauty supplement.

Boots is the UK's leading provider of health and beauty products with over 1,400 stores nationwide. One million of their top customers were polled to ask for their positive experiences and favourite products and Imedeen was voted No. 1 in the beauty category - an outstanding level of customer satisfaction backed up by excellent testimonials. One customer claimed 'Imedeen really improved my complexion as it can be very dry at times, but all the dryness cleared and my skin became radiant', while another said 'I have been taking Imedeen for years now and I can honestly say it is the best supplement I have ever used. It really has made a visible difference to my skin'.

The Award was presented to UK General Manager, Suzi Salkeld, by celebrity sports presenter, Kirsty Gallagher, at a press breakfast in London on 20th January 2004.

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3. Deadline for mailing/sending entries is on March 31, 2004, midnight.
4. Draw date is on April 12, 2004 at the Ferrosan office in Makati.
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6. Consolation prizes include 14 gift certificates for beauty treatments and other products. Winners outside of Metro Manila will get the cash equivalent of the consolation prize only if there are no participating outlets in the area.
7. For more details, log on to www.HerWord.com

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PALMS POINTE



This idyllic setting is what Filinvest had in mind when it conceptualized Palms Pointe, a seven-hectare gated community within Filinvest Corporate City in Alabang. With only 148 prime lots within a private enclave, it offers the security and amenities that people expect from an exclusive residential village.

Palms Pointe enjoys a quiet location at the highest point of the city, overlooking the sprawling Palms Country Club. The site is less than five minutes away from the Filinvest Interchange and is very accessible from Commerce Avenue and Alabang-Zapote Road, the city's major entry points.

Aside from the sports facilities of next-door-neighbor The Palms Country Club, other entertainment and leisure options such as Festival Supermall, Westgate Center and Southpoint Driving Range are within minutes away. It benefits from being part of Filinvest Corporate City, a master-planned satellite city that has revitalized Southern Metro Manila with developments that have created both lifestyle and investment value for the region.

Nestled within a peaceful alcove within a dynamic satellite city, Palms Pointe lets you



experience the best life has to offer in a home that holds valuable gifts for the family.

Gift of nature

Nature is a generous amenity at Palms Pointe, with tree-lined avenues, pocket parks and a children's playground to provide refreshing distractions for kids of all ages. Fresh air and open spaces characterize the entire city as well, with Filinvest Corporate City's environment-friendly urban design. It's a welcome respite from the urban jungle and the perfect environment to raise kids.

Gift of peace and community

Palms Pointe offers you restful sleep and a feeling of well being because you know



Valuable gifts for the family in a package called home

your family is safe within an exclusive village. With the limited number of lots available, you know you're in good company with a warm community of neighbors. Palms Pointe fosters the feeling of a close-knit community where neighbors can become lifelong friends.

Gift of time and memories

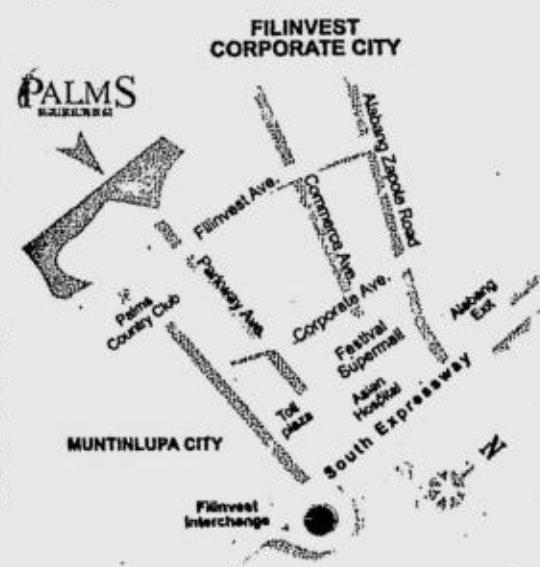
Though set comfortably apart, Palms Pointe remains part of a dynamic city where everything you need is within reach. You are minutes away from the best schools, offices, hospitals and shopping centers. Best of all, the world-class Palms Country Club is a stone's throw away. That's like having a range of leisure amenities right in your own backyard. With traffic and travel time eliminated, you have more time to make memories with the people you value most.

Gift of foresight

More than a home, Palms Pointe is a premium property located in the rapidly booming south. It is an investment of a lifetime, sure to appreciate as Filinvest Corporate City continues to grow. It's not a mere plot of land, but your own piece of the city and a legacy you can pass on to future generations.

With all these benefits, Palms Pointe is the best gift you can give your family — truly a haven you would love to come home to each day.

Palms Pointe is another quality development of Filinvest Alabang, Inc., the company spearheading the development of Filinvest Corporate City. For more information, interested parties may call the Filinvest Marketing Office at 842-5555 or 8096517 to 22 or e-mail palmspointe@filinvestcorpcity.com.



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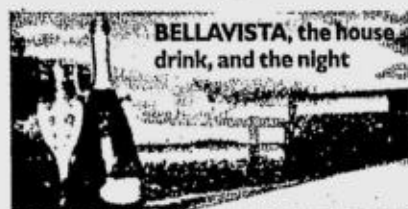
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Dream sanctuary by the sea

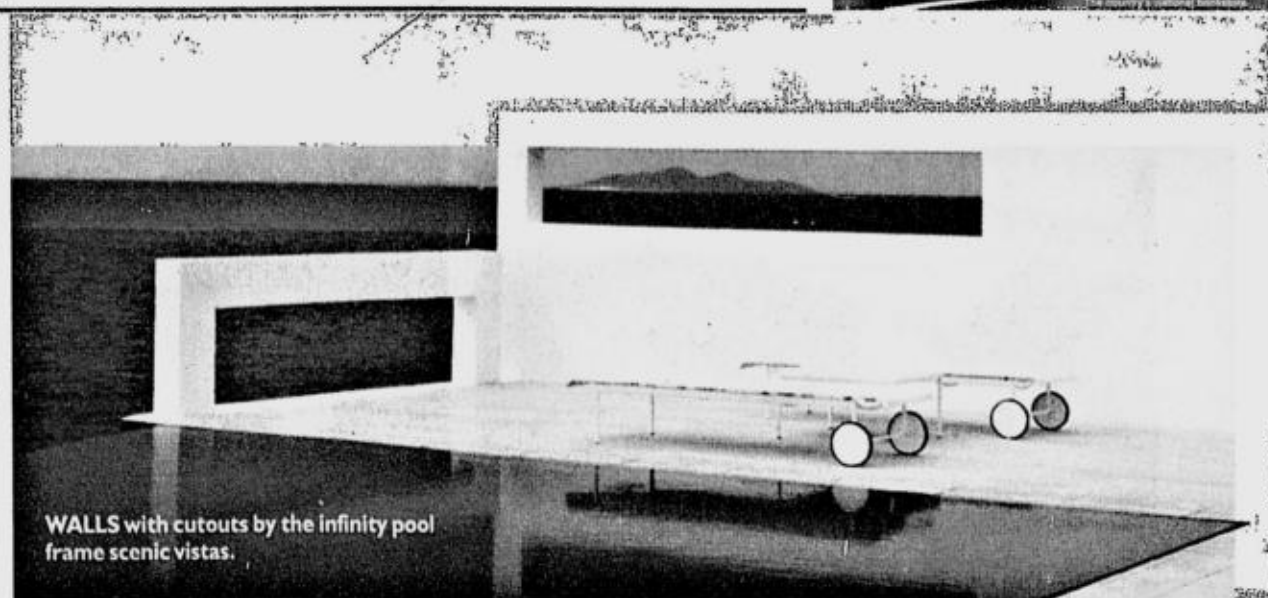
Text by Alex Y. Vergara
Photos by Chito Vecina

SINCE she started inviting friends over to Bellavista, her newly built seaside home in Punta

Fuego, Batangas, Josephine Knox has been receiving nothing but praises.

The contemporary white structure designed by architect Ed Calma never

DREAM/F2



WALLS with cutouts by the infinity pool frame scenic vistas.



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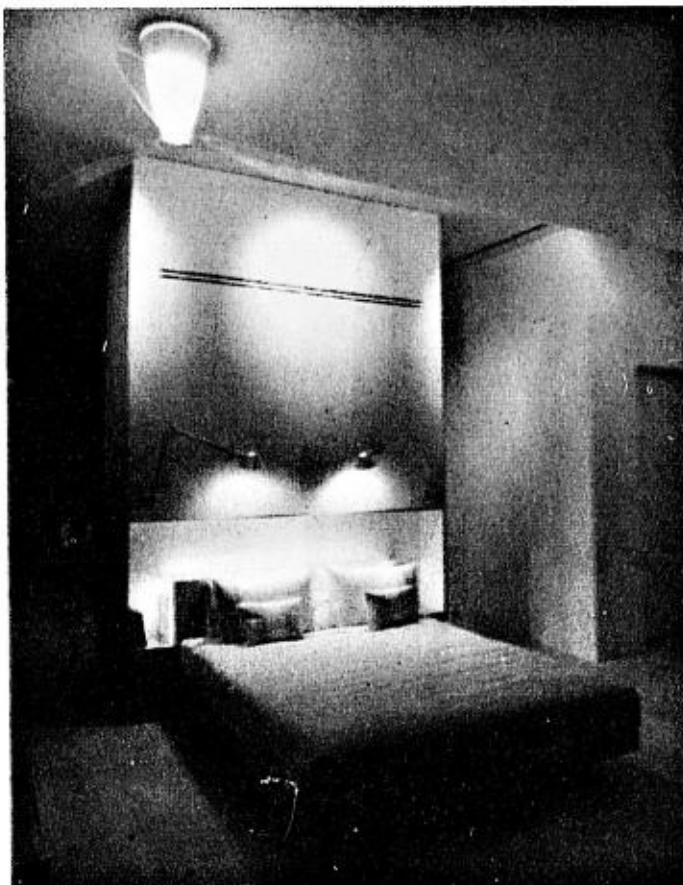
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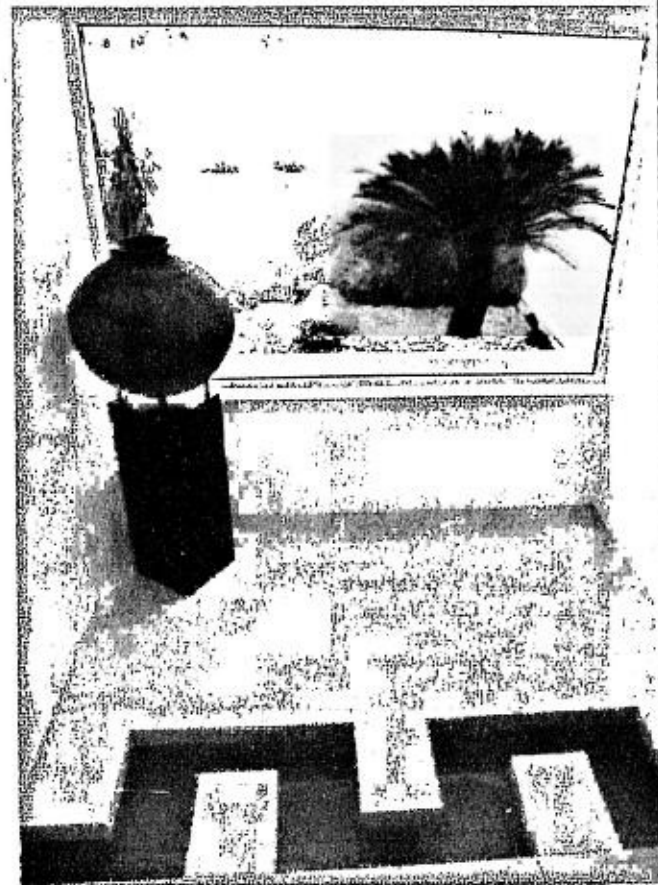
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THE VIEWING room with all-white furniture pieces and a set of Venetian masks



MASTER bedroom with a floating bed built around a huge headboard



JOSEPHINE got the idea for this geometric water feature while browsing through a magazine in an airport.

Dream sanctuary by the sea

From page F1

fails to elicit hearty "wows" from guests as they go through the main door and descend a flight of stairs leading to the nearly all-white interiors, which open out to the deep blue South China Sea.

But the best compliment Josephine has received so far came from Ervin Knox, her Abu Dhabi-based American husband.

"Bellavista isn't the biggest, most expensive house he has ever seen," she says, "but he considers it the nicest. And that to me is all that matters."

"This look is something Erv and I would like to live in for the rest of our lives," she adds.

During the more than two years that went into Bellavista's design and construction, the pair of "corporate gypsies" burned the lines and exchanged notes and images via e-mail.

The couple plans to retire at Bellavista as soon as Ervin packs his bags and go home for good. Josephine herself has either renovated or decorated 18 homes before this dream project.

Famous influences

Before Bellavista, Calma also designed Josephine's Rockwell flat.

This time, they collaborated with Excel Construction in fashioning a white house influenced by the likes of world-famous architects such as Luis Barragan, Ricardo Legorreta, Gae Aulenti, John Lautner and Richard Meier.

These influences include seven vertical glass panels, one for each day of the week, that line the side of the wall by the main stairs leading to the kitchen and dining area (Legorreta), the cantilevered fence that embeds a giant boulder in front of the house (Aulenti and Lautner), white exteriors and interiors (Meier) and fountains that jut out of concrete spouts in the front yard and swimming pool (Barragan).

But more than the famous names that provided its inspiration, Bellavista stands out from most of the houses in Punta Fuego because of the sensibility and simplicity that went into its design and construction.

In lieu of tiled roofs and earth-toned walls so common in the gated hideaway, Josephine and Calma went for an all-white, three-bed-

room affair with multi-level terraces that embrace the cliff and jut out into the sea.

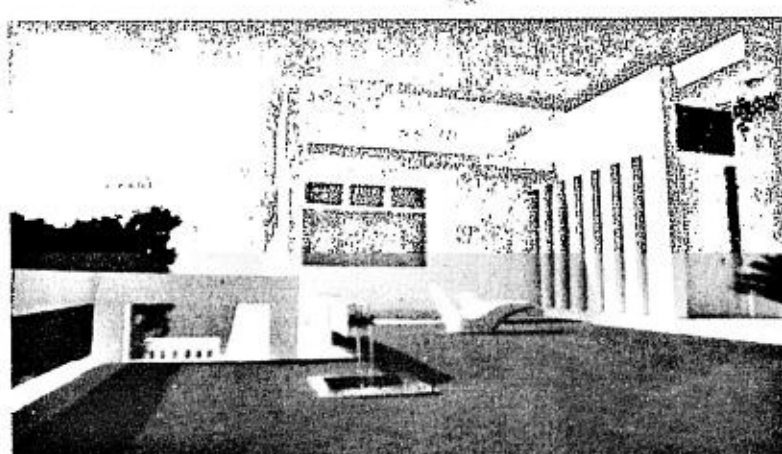
Save for several trademark-Calma elements such as the three "flying" buttresses that frame the third floor and the cantilevered terrace supported by boulders, Bellavista is seemingly unobtrusive from the front road. Viewed from the sea, however, the house is nothing short of awesome.

Since it's situated on a cliff, the architect has had to work around it. Thus, the viewing room, which is on the house's third floor, is actually on the first floor with a view of the street.

Since the two guest rooms, which are accessible through a bleached oak spiral staircase, are located on the same level on the other side, visitors are treated to a view of the sun and sea. Adjacent to the living room on the second floor is the master bedroom with a ringside view of nature as well.

Form and function, Josephine's mantra, extends to the way Bellavista was constructed. In place of wood and rust-prone metal, for instance, the house is made up mostly of double-cavity walls that act as a buffer against the seaside heat and moisture.

Even Josephine's choice of plants, influenced by Xeriscaping or the use of decorative



VERTICAL glass panels were inspired by Legorreta, while the outdoor fountain is Calma's version of the one made famous by Barragan.

FLYING buttresses are trademark Calma.

rocks and low-maintenance varieties, such as cacti, horsetails, aloes vera, yucca, sansiviera and bougainvillea, is dictated by Punta Fuego's unique but harsh seaside environment.

"You make virtues out of necessities," says. "You work with the environment. don't fight it."

Streamlined

As we lined our way down the beige, rammed-tiled stairs (tiles are a common feature that extends all the way to the terrace kitchen, bedrooms, viewing room and the maid's quarters), we are led to the kitchen and dining room, a streamlined setup that features a gleaming custom-built kitchen cabinet in white, bleached wood countertop and an eight-seat frosted glass table.

A shorter flight of stairs leads to the living room, a nearly all-white ensemble save three sculptural seats made of orange leather designed by Tom Dickson for Cappellini.

One of Bellavista's unique features that certainly adds to its wow factor is its misty love for contemporary Italian furniture: Cappellini, B&B Italia and Cassina.

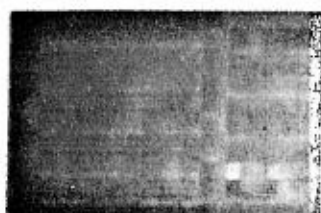
Actually, Bellavista started out as a compromise between husband and wife.



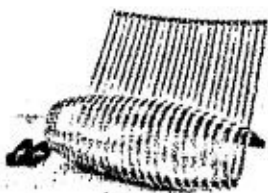
THE KITCHEN and dining areas are clean, crisp and unmistakably contemporary Italian.



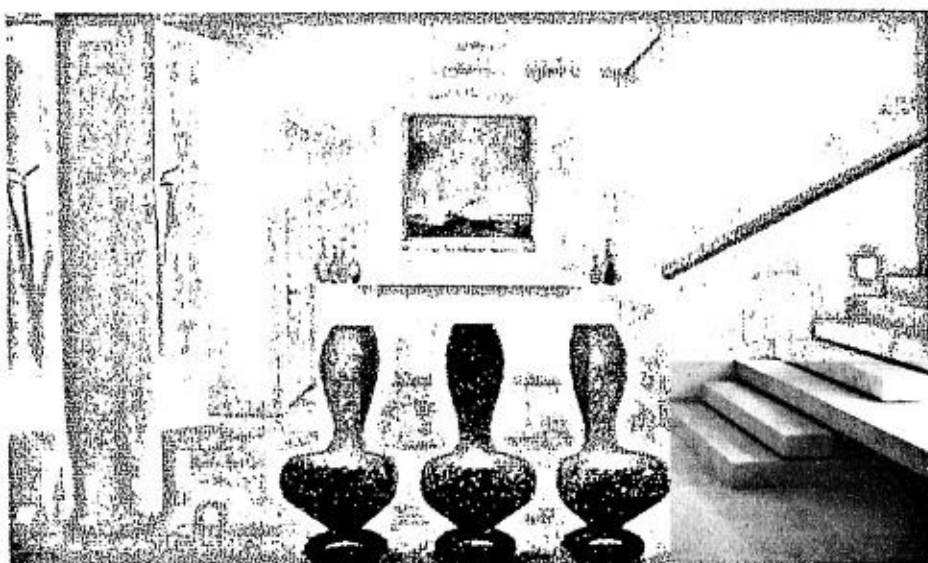
CALMA had to work around Josephine's streamlined furniture pieces, which she bought in Italy even before Bellavista's construction.



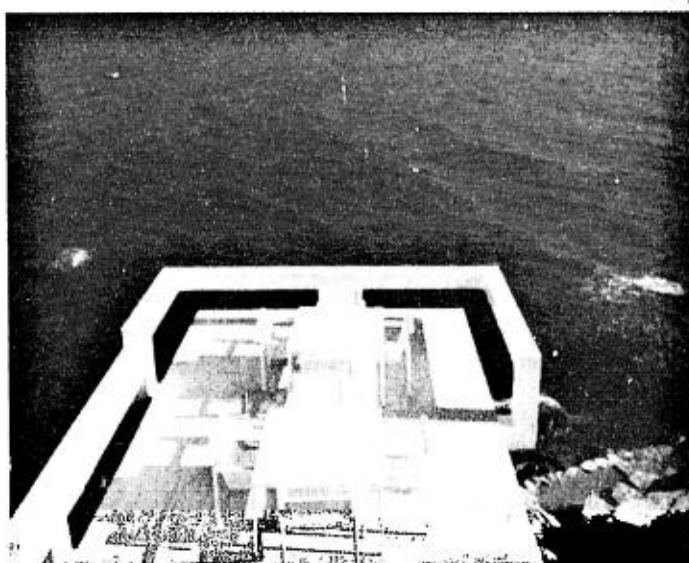
AN ABSTRACT work by Lito Carating by the bedroom wall



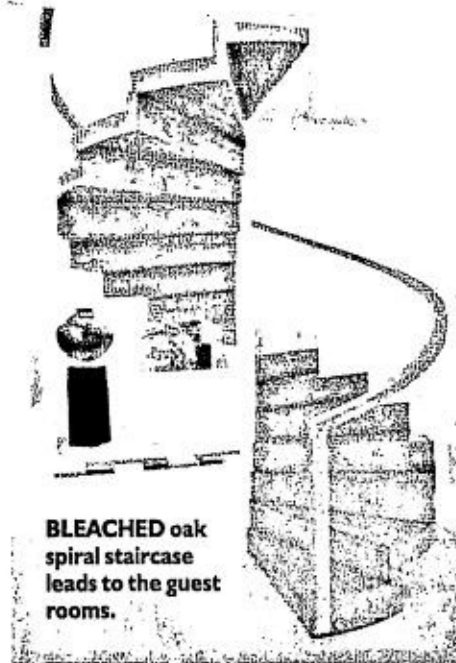
BLEACHED oak spiral staircase leads to the guest rooms.



TOM Dixon's sculptural orange chairs are among the few items in the white house the add hints of color.



A CANTILEVERED terrace, one of three terraces actually, that seems to jut out to the sea



Bellavista, Ervin and Josephine Knox's new home in Punta Fuego, dazzles with the sensibility and simplicity that went into its making

Josephine wanted to live in Italy, while he wanted to retire someday in the Philippines where most of his golfing buddies are. They struck a compromise by acquiring a property in Punta Fuego, which she considers the next best thing to a Mediterranean escape.

"Living in Italy would have been lovely," says Josephine, who lived in Milan for seven years with Ervin and his son Seth, "but it could also prove difficult. There's no place like the Philippines."

Love affair

Aside from being fluent in Italian, Josephine's love affair with Italy extends to her choice of kitchen cabinet, espresso machine and pizza oven.

Calma had to build the kitchen around her Boffi cabinet, which was waiting in a warehouse in Italy, together with other furniture and accent pieces Josephine had acquired even before Bellavista saw the light of day.

"I've had to ship stuff from Italy several times," she says. "That's one thing I like about Ed (Calma). Not only does he believe in the collaborative process, he was willing to work



ERVIN and Josephine Knox share a passion for form and function. This photo was taken during Bellavista's house warming in February.

around my existing pieces."

Beyond the living room and master bedroom is a series of wall-to-wall glass panels that leads to the main terrace. Sunrise and sunset are two of Josephine's favorite times of the day, and she finds waking up to a view of an orange-colored sky with a boat or two at sea—before doing her yoga routine—stimulating.

Evening her either dancing by herself to piped-in music by the terrace or sipping a glass of the house wine, a sparkling Italian variety that goes by the name—you guessed it—Bellavista!

Between doing the party scene in Manila and lazily watching the day pass by at Punta Fuego, Josephine says she'd readily choose the latter anytime.

She doesn't share Ervin's passion for fishing. She'd rather cook the fish than catch it (and certainly not clean it!), she says. Both, however, enjoy swimming in their vanishing-edged swimming pool with dark onyx tiles by Diamond Brite.

It took Josephine several months of research and working with FNSB, the country's leading swimming pool maker, to come up with the right shade of tiles to match the sea color.

"Imagine if I hadn't gotten it right," she

says, as she points to the pool, which, when viewed at certain angles and times of the day, seems one with the sea, "I would have cried. I was that driven to get it right."

One condition

Of course, what's a lovely home for when one can't share it with close friends? Josephine doesn't mind having them over on one condition: that they spend at least an hour reading to the school kids at the Dorothy Knox Reading Center at the Balaytigue Elementary School outside Punta Fuego.

The library is named after Ervin's late mother, who also shared the Knox couple's love for reading.

"I had a similar condition as well for friends who came to visit me while we were based in Thailand," she says. "The history major in me wanted them to experience a glimpse of Thai culture by going on a day trip to Ayutthaya."

Of course, one hour is nothing compared to a day. After friends have elicited wows from wide-eyed children by regaling them with a good story, it's time for guests to gush themselves when Josephine Knox tells them the story behind her one-of-a-kind Bellavista.

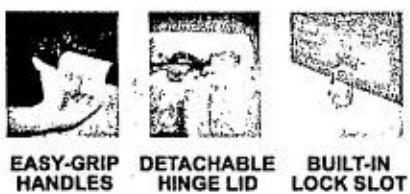
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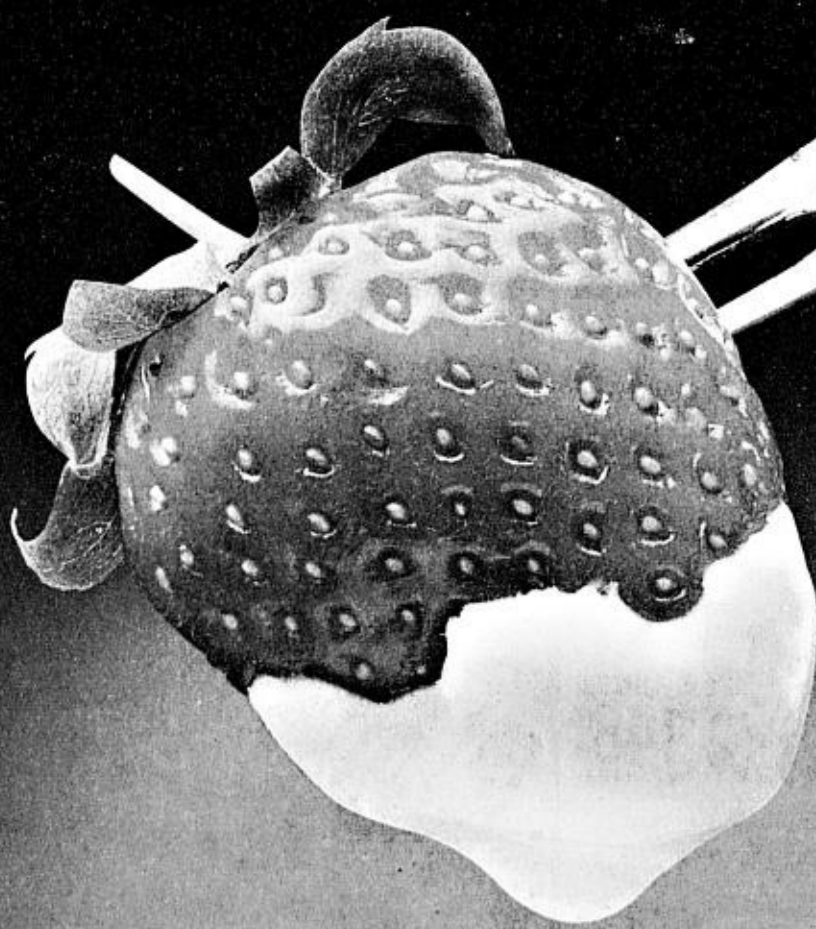
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1/2 cup sliced onions
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1 whole medium size fish, cleaned and sliced (approx. 1/2 kg.)
1 cup peeled, sliced labanos (radish)
1 pack 37 g. MAGGI Sinigang Sa Miso Mix
150 g. mustasa leaves

Procedure:

Heat oil, sauté garlic, onions and tomatoes until limp. Pour in water and bring to a boil. Add fish and cook for 5 minutes. Add labanos and cook for 3 minutes or until crisp tender. Add MAGGI Sinigang Sa Miso Mix and then the mustasa leaves. Bring to a boil.

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	Galtungong Reg. P 92.00 TLC PRICE P92.00		FUJI Apple #80 3 1/2" Reg. P 47.00 TLC PRICE P47.00
	Garlic Taiwan Reg. P 35.00 TLC PRICE P35.00		

	SWIFT Sweet n' Juicy Hotdog Cocktail 1 kg. TLC PRICE P107.75 Reg. Price 112.00		NUTRILICIOUS Mom's Sandwich Spread 430 mL TLC PRICE P51.50 Reg. Price 53.75
	PUREFOODS Chick n' Tasty Hotdog Chick 1 kg. TLC PRICE P127.00 Reg. Price 129.00		KRAFT Cheez Whiz Fondue 250 g. TLC PRICE P44.25 Reg. Price 44.75
	BAGUIO Cooking Oil Cooking 1.5 kg (3.3 lbs) TLC PRICE P90.50 Reg. Price 93.25		GOLDILOCKS Dinner Rolls 12's TLC PRICE P31.00 Reg. Price 33.00
	DEL MONTE Tomato Sauce 1.5 kg TLC PRICE P12.50 Reg. Price 12.70		GARDENIA White Bread 60's TLC PRICE P34.00 Reg. Price 34.00
	AJINOMOTO Ajino-Mo 1 kg. TLC PRICE P21.00 Reg. Price 22.00		GREAT TASTE 3-in-1 Premium Coffee 14 g. 40's TLC PRICE P106.50 Reg. Price 110.50
	CENTURY Tuna 1 kg. TLC PRICE P19.25 Reg. Price 19.50		BEAR BRAND 1+ Growing Up Milk 946 g. TLC PRICE P207.50 Reg. Price 210.50
	BLUE BAY Tuna On Sealed Flavors 1 kg. TLC PRICE P12.75 Reg. Price 13.00		BIRCH TREE Full Cream Milk Powder 25 kg. TLC PRICE P549.50 Reg. Price 555.00
	MOONISH Lungs On Sealed Flavors 150 g. TLC PRICE P19.00 Reg. Price 20.75		MILK MAGIC Full Cream UHT Milk 1 L. TLC PRICE P34.50 Reg. Price 36.00
	PUREFOODS Vienna Sausage 1 kg. TLC PRICE P22.75 Reg. Price 23.60		ANGEL Evaporada 410 mL TLC PRICE P17.50 Reg. Price 19.50
	ARGENTINA Corned Beef 1 kg. TLC PRICE P22.75 Reg. Price 23.60		POST OREO O'S Breakfast Cereal 30 g. TLC PRICE P148.50 Reg. Price 166.50
	MAGGI Milky Noodle Soup Chicken & Beef 1 kg. TLC PRICE P8.85 Reg. Price 9.25		BLUSKIES Crackers 200 g. TLC PRICE P13.50 Reg. Price 14.75
	MAGGI Cup Noodle Chicken & Beef 1 kg. TLC PRICE P15.75 Reg. Price 16.50		CUBEE Water Sandwich On Sealed Flavors 1 kg. TLC PRICE P4.50 Reg. Price 4.75

	PEE WEE Flavored Snacks On Sealed Flavors 40 g. TLC PRICE P3.75 Reg. Price 3.95		AQUAFRESH Toothpaste Toothpaste 130 g. (4.6 oz) TLC PRICE P42.75 Reg. Price 44.75
	OISHI Fridge Potato Chips On Sealed Flavors 70 g. TLC PRICE P17.50 Reg. Price 18.50		MAXI-PEEL Sunblock Cream SPF 30 12 g. TLC PRICE P21.75 Reg. Price 23.75
	GANDOUR Satori Chocolate Bar 30 g. TLC PRICE P6.00 Reg. Price 6.50		NIZORAL Anti-Dandruff Shampoo 100 g. TLC PRICE P140.00 Reg. Price 147.75
	MAYFAIR Silver Crunch Milk Chocolate 50's TLC PRICE P21.50 Reg. Price 22.50		HERBANA Papaya Soap 100 g. TLC PRICE P34.75 Reg. Price 38.75
	WRIGLEY Chewing Gum 100's TLC PRICE P33.75 Reg. Price 34.75		JERGENS Moisturizer Lotion 100's TLC PRICE P36.75 Reg. Price 42.75
	DOLE Pineapple Juice 1.5 L. TLC PRICE P37.75 Reg. Price 39.75		MODESS Feminine Napkin 100's TLC PRICE P27.75 Reg. Price 28.75
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LIFESTYLE



LIDING Oledan and Ising Vazquez

Chinese feast in Forbes Park garden

IT was a fabulous night worthy of all the taipans and taitais that came in full force, *palanggas*. Held at the sprawling gardens of the North Forbes Park home of philanthropist and author Chito Collantes, the occasion was the birthday of her sister, vivacious Ising Madrigal Vazquez.

Welcoming the chi-chi invitees were the Gang of Three, hostess Chito, Jewelers' ra-

**WITHOUT
BATTING
AN EYELASH**

*Maurice
Arcache*

Photos by Alex Van Hagen
on Kodak Max



diant pearl, Baby Cruz, and the honoree, Ising Vazquez.

In the patio, guests were treated to a rich selection of cheeses and grapes. The grand chef of the elegant Mandarin Hotel prepared a table full of *siopao*, *siomai* and spring rolls (all Ising's favorites) and a delicious rack of ham served with

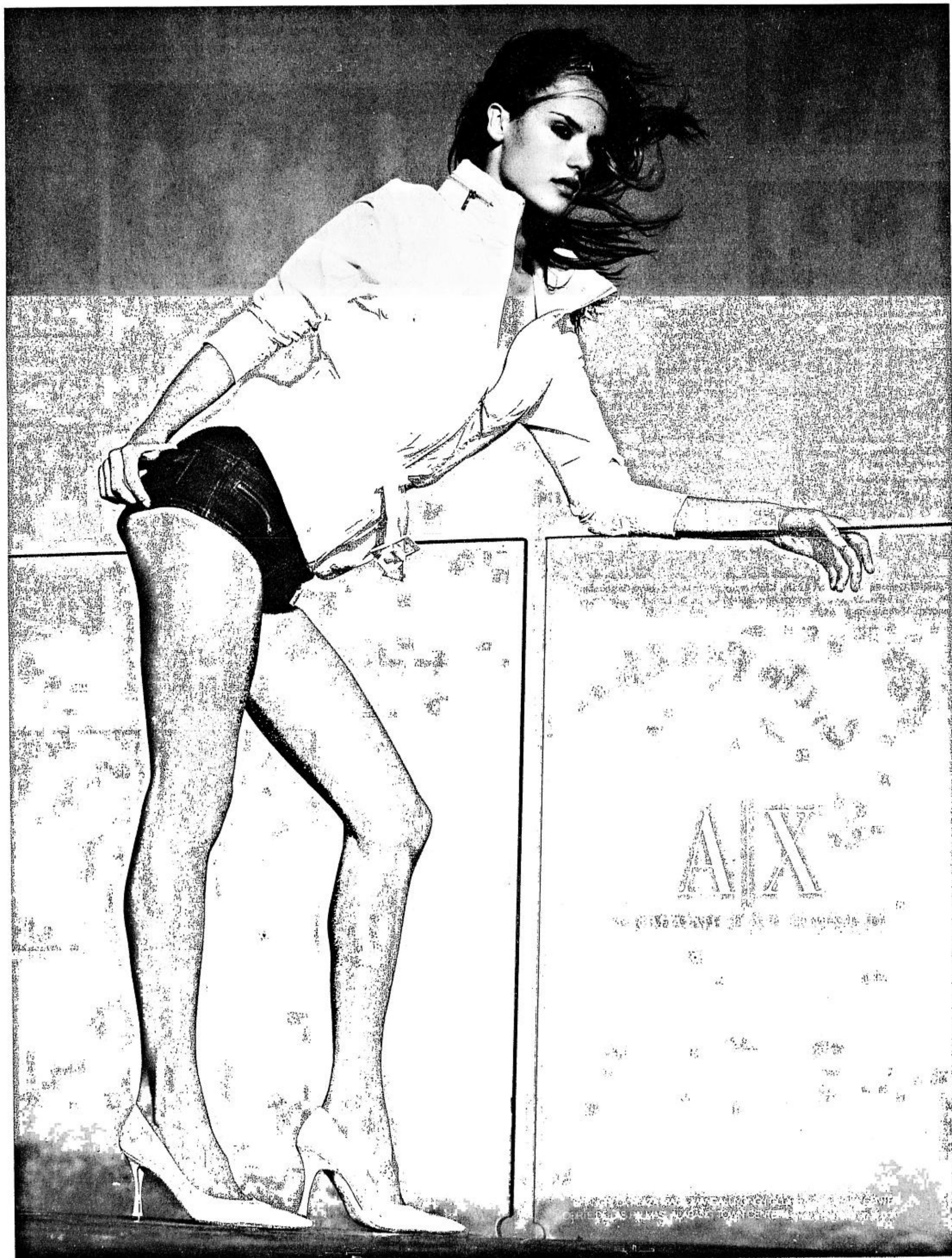
pao (Chinese bread) in keeping with the Chinese motif.

The spectacular garden looked like the dynasties of old with tons of Chinese lanterns.



MERCY Tuazon and Pitoy Moreno

CHINESE/ G2





PANDOT Ocampo and Helmut Galsberger



LETTY Santos with Cristina Ponce-Enrile, Diane Santos and Karen Santos



JOSIE Sy, Beth Day Romulo and Ramon Sy



BEA and Jaime Zobel



CHLOE Romulo, Peping Periquet and Aurora "Bubut" Lapuz Sagaz



LULU Virtusio with Ms Virtusio and Cesar Virtusio



JUN Tambunting with Conchita Toda and Tonette Lagdameo



MELY Hechanova, Raul Manzano and Paing Hechanova



MANUEL Collantes with Mary de Leon, Chito Madrigal-Collantes, lawyer James Linn, Princess Ira Furstenberg, Mme. Imelda Romualdez Marcos, Dr. Daniel Vazquez, Ising Madrigal Vazquez and Baby Cruz

Chinese feast in Forbes Park garden

From page G1

On the red-covered tables were *ang paos* (red envelopes) with gold-covered chocolates and *kiat-kiats*. Loads of flowers in antique Chinese blue and white vases, and on the tables, were exquisitely arranged by Antonio Garcia of Mabolo, natch!

The to-die-for yummy buffet was superbly executed by the talented Jessie Sincioco of Le Soufflé.

Wishing the celebrator many happy returns were ultra glam patroness of the art, Imelda Cojuangco; popular couple Louie and Mellie Ablaza; former Rep. Baby Asistio; Vicente Ayllon and his wife, vivacious Cristina; Tony Asaad and his wife, stylish Abia; Sylvia Alejandro; in-love-forever couple Andy and Tisha Bautista; eye-catchers Princess Ira Furstenberg, her pal, glamorous Imelda Marcos, and the latter's lawyer, James Linn; Ronnie Concepcion, with beautiful Menchu de las Alas C; the grand dame of the jewelry pack, Liding vda. de Oledan; handsome brothers Mark and Alexander Jentes; vivaciously fun Menchu Katigbak; Guada Robins; Anton Roxas, with his lady friend Conchita vda. de Toda; beautiful couple Martin and Yedda Marie Romualdez; Dulce Romualdez; banker Ramon and Josie Sy; taipan George See; architect Dosdado Talamayan; lawyer Miguel and Judith Vazquez; Vana Virata; Cesar and Lulu Virtusio and daughter Katrina; Marian Warns; Christopher Warns; Bob and Linda Yap; and Arthur and Kay Young.

After the sinful, caloric dessert, everyone sang "Happy Birthday" to Ising, who blew a single candle on the cornucopia cake made by Bettina Kahn Legarda, no less.

Mini cornucopia cakes were specially made for the rich and famous to bring home and nibble on.

After the sumptuous buffet downed with Dom Perignon, it was time to burn all those calories with most of the guests rocking to the '60s and '70s sounds of the Rocking Revival band.

Traveling in style

For almost a decade, Crystal Cruises has been chosen Best Large Ship Cruise Line by



Chito Madrigal Collantes and Baby Cruz



MARIVIC Vazquez, IM Vazquez and Bela Vazquez



MARTIN Romualdez with Mary de Leon and Kokoy Romualdez



HIGH SEAS hotshots. Luisito Goduco, Perla Goduco, Conrado Paras, Azucena Estayo, Evangeline Gloria and Emeline Paras



AMERICAN Express International Tours general manager, vivacious Gerarda de Guzman

readers of the prestigious Conde Nast Traveller and Travel and Leisure.

Well, *palangas*, with its Philippine general sales agent, the American Express Adventure International Tours, the shipping line hosted a fun Crystal Cruise Night 2004 at the Taipan Room of the chi-chi Tower Club, in Makati.

American Express Adventure International president, workaholic spitfire Gerry de Guzman, welcomed a high-profile group of invitees, including Crystal Society members, the line's repeat cruisers in Cosmo Manille. Product manager Nanette San Juan presented the 2004 voyages of the brand-new Crystal Serenity, the Crystal Harmony and the Crystal Symphony. Take note, dahlings, the Crystal ships have received Six Stars from Fielding's, Five Stars from Berlitz and Six Plus Black Stars from Stern.

After loads of drinks and an excellent Chinese dinner prepared by the Club's mega chefs, the evening's program was closed by seasoned traveller and cruise-expert HB "Bimbo" Gapud, brilliant editor in chief of

Expeditions Travel Magazine, no less. He shared his vast experience on-board some of the most awarded and most celebrated cruise vessels in the world.

So, those of you who are dreaming of a fabulous cruise, check out Crystal's new super luxury ships that will be sailing the cool waters of Alaska, New England, Canada and hot hot in places like the Panama Canal, the Mexican Riviera, the Caribbean, the Mediterranean and the Baltic.

You can't go wrong, *palangas*.

Camp John Hay on TV

In "Oh Yes Johnny's Back!" we had featured the beautiful province of La Union and members of the beautiful Ortega clan.

Tomorrow it will be the fantastic Camp John Hay in cool Baguio.

All the things that you associate with Baguio are still in Camp John Hay (CJH)—cool crisp air, picturesque mountain scenery, towering fragrant pine trees, unspoiled ecological beauty and peace and quiet.

Join us as we discuss with CJH hotshot chair Bob Sobrepeña and CJH Development Corp. senior vice president for marketing and sales, brilliant Shean Beddi the development of Camp John Hay as a world-class facility and the ultimate family destination. Check it out at 11 p.m. tomorrow on RPN 9. We guarantee a fun time for all, *palangas*.



SIX-STAR cruise expert. Expeditions Travel Magazine's brilliant editor in chief, HB Gapud



TOP GUNS. Camp John Hay chair Bob Sobrepeña (second from left) and his wife Lissa, with Peng de Tagle (extreme left) and Freddie Mendoza (extreme right)



ERRATUM
In last Tuesday's column (March 23), Roi Phillips was inadvertently identified as Diana Cua in one of the photographs. We regret the error.



OH YES, Johnny's Back at Camp John Hay, with SVP for sales and marketing Shean Beddi



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- Powerbikes (8980377 / 8981536) • Makati: 38 Rockwell Drive
- Joven (6456029) • Pasig: A. Rodriguez Ave. near Marcos Hi-way, Sunlolan
- Shop's (8736900) • Las Pinas: 15 Rosal St, Dona Manuela Subu, Paraplona III
- Bombproof Gear (6341760) • Pasig: 3rd Level, Expansion Mall, Robinson's Galleria

APRIL 4: Deadline for Registration



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GRAND PRIZE for BEST COSTUME is P5,000 cash & a TRIP to the Terry Larrazabal Bike Festival in Ormoc City, Leyte on October 22-24, 2004.

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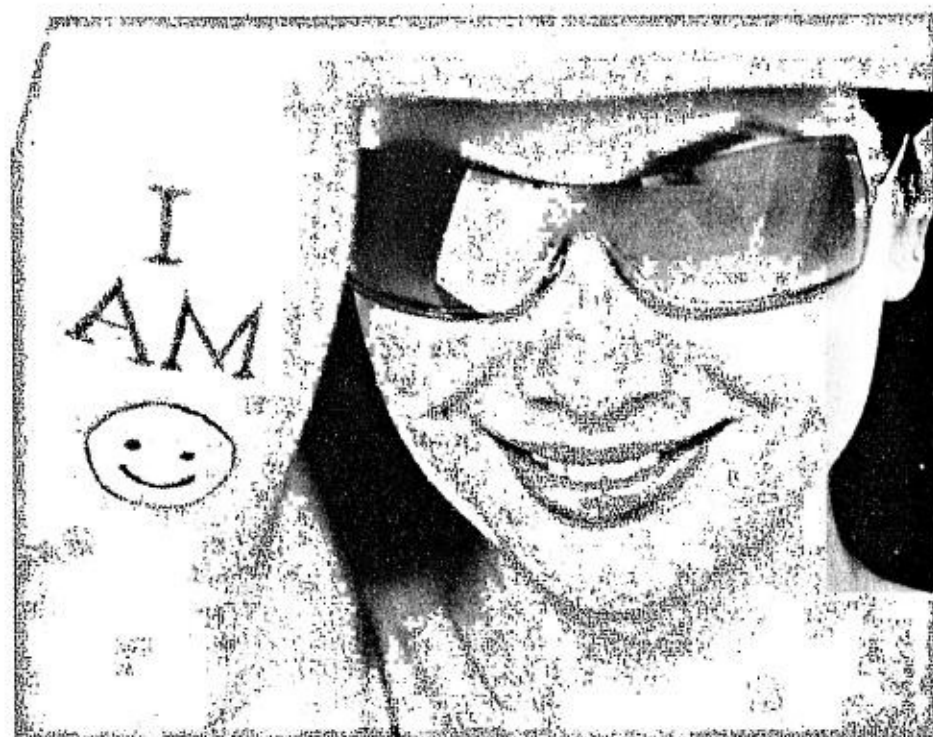
visit www.terrylarrazabalbikefest.com

Lots of Valuable prizes to be given away to costumed riders with decorated bikes!

*Participants vying for the costume award must check in early before the ride to get a number.

Participants unable to register by April 4 may do so on April 18 (Sun) at 5:30 am at the starting/ending venue: Liwasang Bonifacio, Manila.

For inquiries, e-mail: blinkingfireflies@yahoo.com or call 9255455 (c/o Bantay Kalikasan) - www.bantaykalikasan.org



DONITA wears i2i Hanover



I FEEL SEXY

i2i Gufram (P219)

Trendy sunglasses for everyone

SUNGLASS maker i2i has launched its latest marketing campaign, "What Are You Looking At?"

The new i2i campaign is designed to show how the trendiest and most sophisticated designs from around the world are being made accessible to the majority. With i2i, there's something for everyone.

The new i2i campaign features celebrity endorsers MTV VJ Donita Rose and soap opera star Jericho Rosales as photographed by Neil Lucente and Claudine Sia, and styled by Tina Ocampo.

i2i is found in major malls and shopping centers nationwide, and in selected 7-11 outlets.

Correct brushes for right look



ASIDE from the right makeup, cosmetic applicators are also important in achieving the desired look. Quality makeup brushes are vital tools in highlighting facial features, defining and dramatizing them with colors.

Nu Skin has come up with the Nu Colour Brush Collection, a set of premium makeup applicators bundled in a handy lightweight bag. It consists of a powder brush, retractable lip brush, small eye shadow/shaper brush, concealer brush, large eye shadow/blender brush, blush brush, eye liner brush, mascara applicator and a tin head brow brush/eyelash comb. The brushes produce a smooth and even finish. Nu Colour cosmetics and Brush Collection help create different looks for different occasions.

The Nu Colour Brush Collection is exclusively distributed by Nu Skin Philippines, an affiliate of Nu Skin Enterprises.

Call 6890333 or visit www.nuskin.com.ph.

Giving new sheen to hair

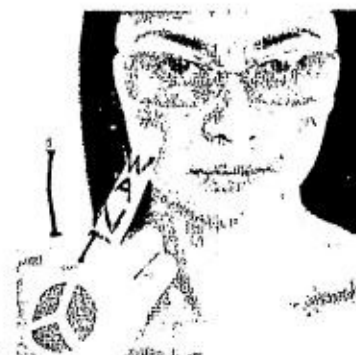
DO WONDERS in your hair style with Citre Shine's In Style Styling Liquid, which has a special formulation that provides flexible hold and all-day control, while boosting volume and shine.

Simply spray it on—no mess, no stickiness.

Also available is the Mega Hold Style and Control Gel. Exclusively distributed by Rustan Marketing Corp.



CECCOTTI (P219)

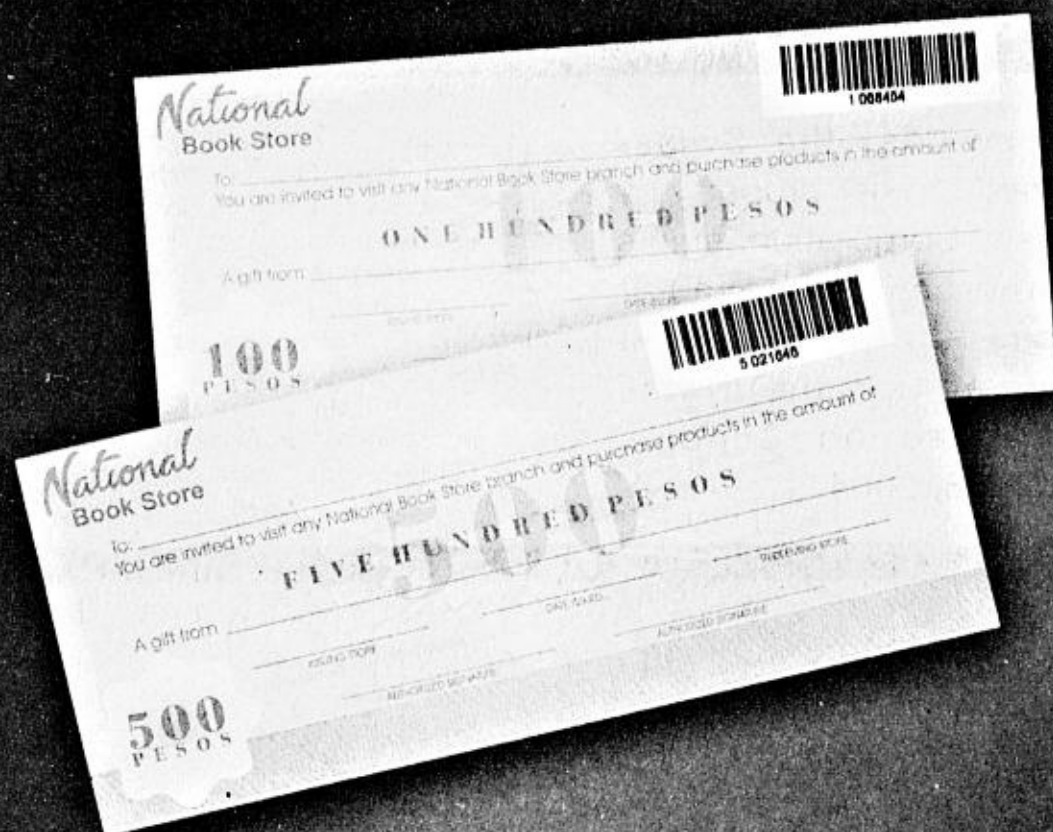


i2i Pichler (P219)



i2i Kunst (P159)

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paparazzi

BRITTANY OPENS NEW SWISS PRESERVE AT CROSSWINDS



Quadrilles feature classic chalet designs completing the alpine country-like landscape at Crosswinds.

Crosswinds, the Swiss-themed top tier property by Brittany Corporation, marks another milestone as it opens up a new area reserved for the Swiss Quadrilles on Sunday, March 28, 2004.

The Quadrilles, Crosswinds' version of four-unit residences, take their inspiration from classic Swiss chalets. Alongside the pine tree-lined landscape, the continually swirling cool winds, the hillside topography and the calm, quiet atmosphere, Crosswinds makes for the only alpine-like sanctuary south of Manila.

This combination of property features led to Crosswinds' quick rise to popularity, eventually selling out the

original set of Quadrilles in four months, an unprecedented performance record.

The Swiss Quadrilles

The Swiss Quadrilles are designed by Recio + Casas and SC and A.

Inside the Quadrilles, the Swiss concept of a "great room" provides for spacious, comfortable living, ideal for entertaining guests or simply spending quality time with family.

Porches at ground level provide the perfect place for enjoying the view, breakfasts in the cool morning air or for some afternoon coffee or tea. Bedrooms at the upper level feature balconies ideal for savoring the pine-scented fresh air. The pitched roof enhances the Swiss look and feel of the Quadrille and provides for attic space. Architectural details that include distinctive wood patterns, overhanging eaves and a comfortable porch complete the Swiss theme of the Quadrilles.

The Swiss Quadrilles are available in two-bedroom and three-bedroom units and are around 135 sq. m. and 165 sq. m.

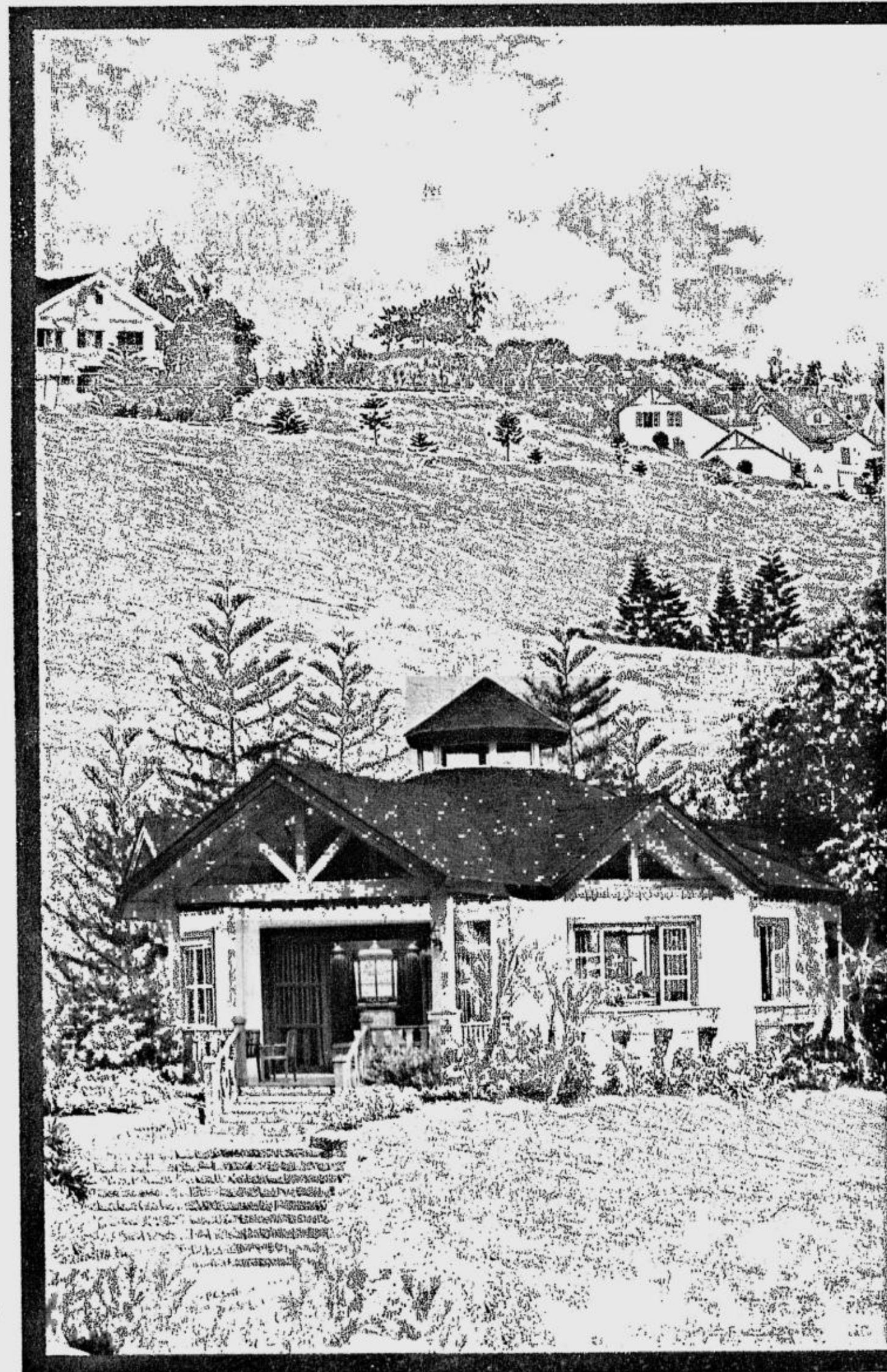
in floor area respectively. Packages start at Php 5.5 million.

Lots are also available with cuts ranging from 450 sq. m. to over 1,000 sq. m. These lots are available for building individual chalets.

With the new area breaking ground at Crosswinds, more people can enjoy the cool pine-scented breeze, the calming quiet and the Swiss ambience.



Interior designs for Crosswinds by sisters Ivy and Cynthia Almaro of Atelier Almaro, are distinctly Swiss, built with ample living space.



HOME SWISS HOME

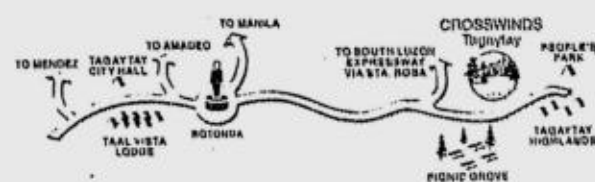
At Crosswinds, you could have your very own little piece of Switzerland, whether it's land for a future home or a chalet you can live in right away.

The homes combine Swiss-inspired wood patterns, wide porches and overhanging eaves. The interiors feature a wide open space, perfect for family gatherings.

And the homes are set against gentle, rolling hills, surrounded by pine trees under a calm, quiet ambience.

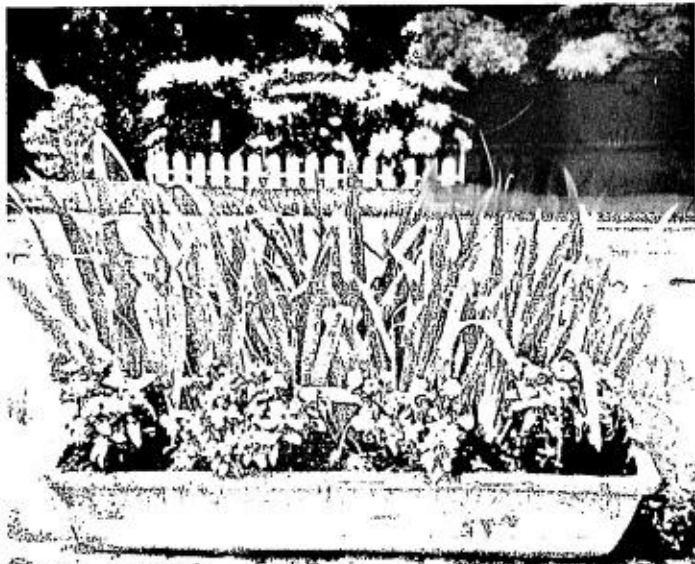
It's a great life at Crosswinds—your home Swiss home.

To know more about Crosswinds, Tagaytay, call us at 850 6986 and 850 2868 or email us at mktg@brittany.com.ph. Or come over to Crosswinds and see what the Swiss life is all about.

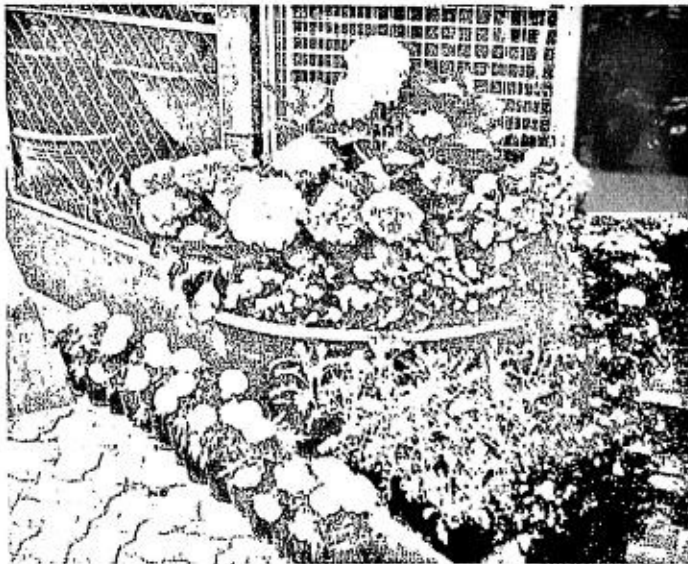


CROSSWINDS
Life is great
Brittany
CORPORATION

LIFESTYLE



WINDOW box. A play of colors makes interesting window treatments.



CREATE a color palette. "Paint" your garden silver, fuchsia pink, lilac and sunshine yellow to set the mood and tone of a small space.

Color your garden



ROCK garden. Various rocks and stones, bromeliads and Japanese lanterns create a little Zen corner.

GREEN 2000 Garden Center, the one-stop landscaping shop, and Landscape Unlimited present landscape designer Francis Gener in a lecture/demonstration on "Basic Landscaping: Coloring Your Garden with Flowers and Foliage", 2 to 5 p.m., April 10, at the Manila Seedling Bank Environment Center, Quezon Ave. cor. Edsa, Quezon City.

Fee is P200 for Green 2000 Garden Center members.

Gener, known for his rock and flower gardens, will discuss how to create a color palette—choosing a few main colors as focal points—pastel to make a space look bigger and bright hues to give the illusion of small space. He will also show how to use foliage as buffer.

Gener says dark green leaves contrast nicely with yellow, pink, blue and other pastel-colored flowers while light-colored leaves go well with bright-colored blooms like red, orange and purple.

He will also give tips on how to use stones, rocks and boulders to enhance the design and add color to the garden.

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SM CITY MANILA Entertainment Plaza, 5/F

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PBA INTERACTIVE

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SM SUPERCENTER SUGAT Activity Center

HOME RADIO MALL TOUR

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SUN • 4PM

SM CITY BICUTAN Entertainment Plaza, Bldg. A

SUGARFREE

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SAT • 4PM

SUN • 4PM

Putting on the green

THESE days, when it is considered good business to turn agricultural or idle land into real estate developments, we can thank our lucky stars that some developers out there still think in terms of "going back to nature" or greening barren space. Otherwise we'll have nothing but malls and shopping arcades and concrete jungles to rattle our nerves.

The latest in Ayala Land's (ALI) real estate projects has its sights set on the refreshing and healthful color of green. It has been given an exotic name to evoke images of serenity and peace—"Serendra."

Developers call it "suburban living in the city." And to achieve this goal, ideas were culled from all over the world.

Greening team

The team finally chosen to

put the greening concept together consists of the Santa Monica-based architectural firm of Moore Ruble Yudell (MRU), and the firm of landscape architect Mia Lehrer. MRU is noted for the way it handles densities, its use of curvilinear and serpentine elements to mark the relationship between one area and another. Mia Lehrer has extensive experience in tropical styles and uses this to complement overall architectural designs.

And so it is that the sought-after image—suburban serenity—is gradually emerging in an urban locale, in Bonifacio Global City. The suburban amenities here include proximity to Makati's business district; accessibility to schools, churches, a mini haven for shoppers, and well-secured premises; and most of all, a lot of green space. It is this closeness to nature that

SEEING GREEN

Doris Gaskell Nuyda



best describes and distinguishes Serendra.

Some projects like to stress the elegance of their buildings and interiors, "putting on the Ritz" as the saying goes. Serendra can also tote up its elegant points, but is literally more down-to-earth about it, "putting on the green" instead.

Good business sense

So this 12-hectare property has set aside 2/3 to create a really green environment. While

some businesses seem impervious to nature-friendly practices, this one believes that when you enhance nature, you are likely to increase profits, too.

It will take at least five years before this "suburb in the city" is ready for occupancy but there is a scale model and an architect's perspective to give interested parties an idea of what to expect. The "2/3" allotted to the environment will consist of lush landscaping of large canopy trees, wide spaces interspersed with what ALI calls "intimate clusters of gardens."

There will be theme gardens and flower patches, fruit orchards, and beds of kitchen herbs. Vine-covered trellises will provide beauty and shade over pathways along buildings, inviting people to ride less and walk more. There will be pools and little streams for play and

sports that will serve as water catchment as well.

While sports facilities are inevitably part of overall plans, ALI promises residents that in several other ways, they "will know once more what it's like to walk and run freely on lawns and gardens." Other environmental considerations include a waste disposal system, which ALI officials believe will be more effective when residents themselves can input their own ideas.

Promoting neighborliness

Residents are assured that this will be a low-density development, which means that overcrowding in any section will be avoided for safety's sake and to make it easier for children to play near their homes and residents to interact with each other. One way to ensure this is by

having low-level parking spaces that will make it unnecessary to leave cars on the streets.

Serendra departs from other ALI developments by doing away with the individual lot and house scheme like those in Forbes Park and Dasmariñas Village. The high-rise buildings in this project are not the skyscraper types, to allow a feeling of neighborly closeness, a feeling not always possible when a home is in a truly tall structure.

Real estate developers who "put on the green" in their projects know it makes good sense, simply because they are dealing with land, one of Nature's most precious resource. And it must be enhanced and protected if it is to continue being useful to humans.

E-mail the writer at dorisnuyda@yahoo.com.

'Celebrities' grace Los Baños show

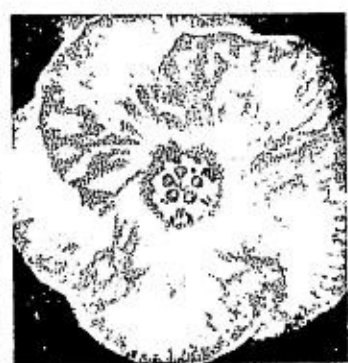
THE STAR for All Seasons, Diamond Star, Nova Star and Super Star debuted during the recent Los Baños Garden Show.

Unfortunately, the Megastar was unable to make her appearance on time.

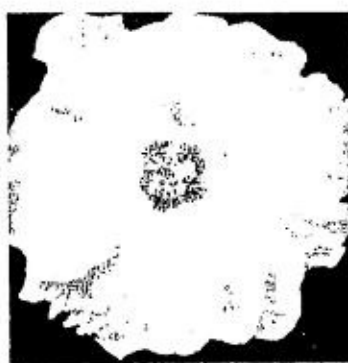
The stars, rather their namesake *gumamelas*, represent the Hibiscus Celebrity Series, the newest line of hybrid hibiscus introduced by the University of the Philippines Los Baños (UPLB) Institute of Plant Breeding.

The institute, as its contribution to the celebration of 100 years of Philippine independence, started its launch of *gumamela* hybrid with the Centennial Series with varieties named after heroines of the Philippine revolution. Outstanding varieties included Millenia and Nay Isa.

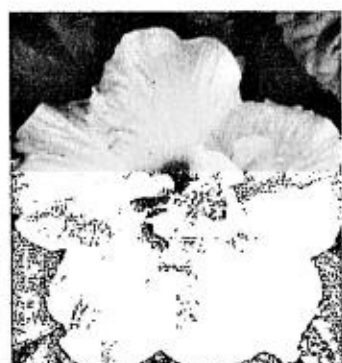
The Millennium Series followed and honored women sci-



SUPER Star



DIAMOND Star



STAR for All Seasons



NOVA Star

entists of UPLB who made outstanding contributions to Philippine agriculture. Among them was Helen Valmior, a foremost expert in orchids and an active member of the Los Baños Orchid Society.

Varieties in the Celebrity Series will be named after people with mass appeal, stars of the entertainment industry.

Star for All Seasons, named

after Vilma Santos, is a beautiful multi-petaled mauve or old rose *gumamela* with leaves that are attractively serrated.

Diamond Star, named after Maricel Soriano, is an exceptionally large pure white hibiscus with a reddish pink center. The yellow Nova Star, named after Kris Aquino, has prominent splashes of reddish-purple with irregular, wavy mar-

gin.

Nora Aunor's namesake, the Super Star, has an almost perfect circular flower with overlapping petals. The yellow flower has a prominent orange pin wheel design.

Sharon Cuneta still has to wait for the Mega Star.

The new hybrids were developed by Rey Pimentel, former

plant breeder at the institute. Pimentel said he worked on the *gumamela* because the variability found in the species showed it had a lot of possibilities. Moreover, *gumamela* is popular, its seeds are easy to germinate, and it takes a short

time to evaluate new crosses. Mass propagation can also be done rapidly.

Rights to propagate the Celebrity series were bought by Vic Chin, who made available the new hybrids in the garden show.

THE SMART OUTPATIENT

by Dr. Norge Tan



The truth about cancer tests

The Smart Outpatient is a bi-monthly column that helps you make informed choices about your health.

It's Women's Health Month and during this time, health concerns invariably include "The Big C" or cancer --- and in the case of women, breast cancer. Experts tell us, ALL women are at risk regardless of family history of the disease, marital status, or number of children. But before you go rushing to the nearest hospital to get that all-important mammogram, get smart and be informed first.



Dear Dr. Norge, I've been wanting to have a mammogram. Is it okay if I undergo the exam in a medical clinic?
---Marivic, 38

While it's true that a mammogram can be had in big medical centers, consider this: you'll have to schedule it a couple of days or even a week in advance. There is a waiting list, and when you get there you'll discover that you still have to wait in line. During the wait, you are of course exposed to all possible air-borne infections that hospitals harbor.

Given this fact, why not consider having your mammogram in the more reputable outpatient clinics instead? The waiting time is shorter, you're less exposed to infections, and with most of these clinics now located in the malls, there's the added convenience of easily incorporating these tests into your family activities. Time is precious after all, and it'll be time well spent.

The mammograms available in the newer and bigger outpatient clinic networks are now at par with those in the hospitals in terms of quality, price, and reliability. The technicians also have the same skill and training. And more importantly, the doctors who interpret the

mammograms in the hospitals are the same ones who do it in these clinics.

Dear Dr. Norge, Breast cancer runs in my family and I know I have to have a mammogram sooner or later. How painful is it?
---Nina, 19

Some women experience some discomfort when their breasts are pressed between the mammoplates. This is done to spread the breast tissue for a short time to allow for a better view to be taken. However, the timing of the test does help. It is best to have the mammogram around one to two weeks from the 1st day of your last menstrual period. It is at this time when your breasts are less engorged by hormonal changes and are less likely to be tender.

Mammograms can detect 80-90% of all breast cancers, and is thus an indispensable tool together with clinical breast exams, to fight breast cancer by early detection. Ask your personal physician about the best time to schedule a mammogram.

Dr. Norge Tan is a Family Medicine specialist and is currently the Health Promotion and Quality Assurance Manager of Healthway Medical Clinics. Send your questions to Dr. Tan at ebtan@healthway.com.ph, or fax no. 7514985, or text at 091789011WAY (09178904929)

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Bank goes to garden show

EAST West Bank pulled a surprise in the 11th Annual Garden Show organized by the Ayala Alabang Garden Club by designing a Japanese Zen garden booth.

The bank's Infinity Banking representatives chatted with guests on plants and other subjects inside the bamboo booth, which had a miniature water fountain surrounded by bonsai and various plants.

Coinciding with the garden show was the annual Ayala Alabang Mango Tee, which was also supported by East West Bank. More than 500 participated in the tournament. The Infinity Banking booth served as a rest area for the players, where free towels were given away.

Infinity Banking is East West's way of providing a pleasurable banking experience for elite customers—from preferential financial options to hotel-style concierge services.

Call East West Bank's Infinity Banking Alabang at 7710821 to 13 or visit its office at Westgate, Filinvest Corporate City, Alabang.



INFINITY Banking representatives talked money with prospective clients in a Zen garden.

Award-winner is bestseller

AN UNUSUAL book-inspired bar by NM Carag Furniture and Woodcraft, a furniture manufacturer in Cagayan, has become a bestseller.

Total sales for this bar, which won last year's National Trade Fair (NTF) award for Best Selling Prototype in the Furniture/Furnishings Sector, amounted to P570,000.

The furniture manufacturer, like most top selling companies, was assisted by the Product Development and Design Center of the Philippines (PDDCP). The design center has been working with furniture makers for several years now, helping draw up product development strategies, a key to any successful enterprise, for the companies.

Call Design Center at 8321112 to 18.



BAR set for the book lover



MUSLIM IKEBANA ARRANGEMENT

Overall Ikebana show chair architect Nonette Hubilla shows off her Muslim-inspired creation in the exhibit held at the Shangri-La Plaza Mall, Mandaluyong City. The arrangement in a Muslim pewter container used carnations, philodendron leaves, misty blue and a vine.

The 37th annual Ikebana exhibition, with the theme "Windows to Our Heritage," was opened by Tokiko Takano, wife of the Japanese ambassador; Rosalinda Orosa, arts and culture columnist; Augusto F. Villalon, heritage conservationist; and Shangri-La vice president for finance Mary Ann Dizon. Club president Celia G. Lazaro, over-all co-chair Joyce Kato and Davao Ikebana International president Gel Suarez assisted in lighting the ceremonial *sulô*.



OIL and sand Buddha painting from Indonesia; twill upholstered sofa, chaise lounge and armchairs; a Ren Etagere coffee table with coco shell laminate; two nests of tables made of acacia with leather laminate; lacquered items from Vietnam (red rice bowl, charger, square bowl, photo album in three sizes and oval bowl); an India-made jute rug



54"-DIAMETER mirror frame with coco twig laminate; Ren Collection chest and TV armoire of Philippine mahogany with coco shell laminate; imported CFI upholstered sofa; lounge chair and ottoman made of seagrass and rattan; ox blood ceramic vase; three bamboo series paintings by Rachy Cuna

Essence of style and comfort



KING-SIZE bed of Philippine mahogany with crushed bamboo laminate on headboard; Philippine mahogany side table; two table lamps of Philippine mahogany with carabao horn accent; (on wall) imported x-ray prints of flowers

BORDERS, the city's premier furniture and house accessories store, is "wearing" a distinctive and stylish new look conceptualized by stylist Rachy Cuna.

The Makati-based furniture shop, owned by Alice Streegan-Cruz, offers various home settings that capture the essence of style and comfort, essentials in an ideal home. Furniture and decor pieces are smart, chic, compact and functional.

A rattan set consisting of sofa, loveseat, lounge chair and ottoman departs from the traditional single-color designs as it combines lighter bound joints with the smooth brown for the body. Another set features contrasting snow-white twill upholstered sofa and black angular Etagerie coffee table with coco shell laminate and a dark pair of tables made of acacia wood with leather laminate.

The dining room showcase features

matching yellow porcelain bowls and plates atop a coconut-laminated dining table flanked by flat sea grass and rattan-backed oval chairs. Another setting focuses on the graceful outline of rattan chairs with semi-square backs that curve into rounded arms, set around a glass-topped table with purple orchids and thin bamboo poles as centerpiece.

The bedrooms feature a king-sized bed flanked by two elegant silver square lamps with carabao horn accents and a Tribeca queen bed and a nesting table with wrought iron legs in coco shell laminate.

In arranging the Borders display, Cruz and Cuna built on people's dream houses and tried to turn them into reality.

Borders is at the G/L, G.E. Philippines Bldg., Pasong Tamo Ext., Makati. Visit www.borders.com.ph.



ENCHANTED Blue painting by Rachy Cuna; Tribeca queen bed and nightstand of Philippine mahogany; nesting table with wrought iron legs and coco shell laminate; round coffee table of Philippine mahogany with silver plate accent; (on top of bed) blue green linen throw pillows and nest of tray

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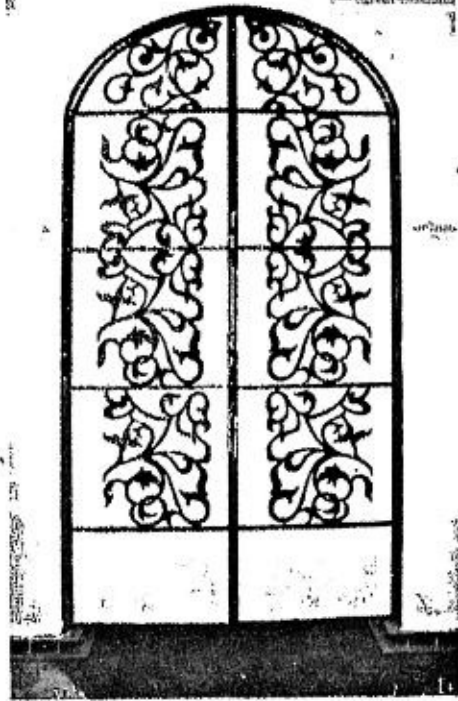
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LIFE STYLE



MARK Villar and
Vanessa Dimayuga
(left); the door that
leads to 360° of
better living (far left)

Full circle of living and fun

AN ELEGANTLY crafted metal gate greeted guests at Red in Shangri-La Hotel, Makati. Expressly designed by 360° Living, the gates created a feeling of welcome at the by-invitation-only Open House dinner.

A new division of Brittany Corporation, long-time master planner and builder of self-contained communities, 360° Living hosted the Open House as its special way of introducing the guests to new lifestyle options.

As expected from an event organized by Keren Pascual, who happened to be celebrating his birthday that night, the guest list was stellar.

The night started with cocktails outside Red, as guests waited for Mark Villar to officially open the gates and invite guests in for a taste of 360° Living.

Dinner, as expected, was superb. Shangri-La's executive chef Christopher Romine truly outdid himself with the salmon sashimi, squid salad and other hors d'oeuvres he personally

FULL/13

on stage 2nvt

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BINAN 1049.511.2268	BEAT BOX	OPEN FROM 8PM TO 5AM NO ENTRANCE FEE
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	KOOLJACKS	OPEN FROM 8PM TO 5AM NO ENTRANCE FEE

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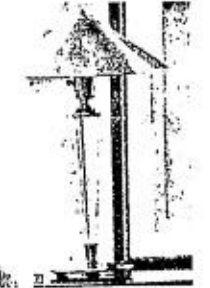
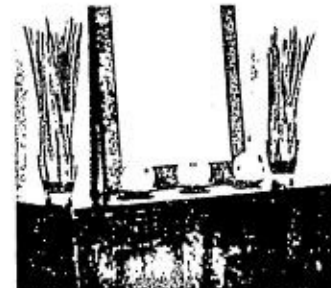


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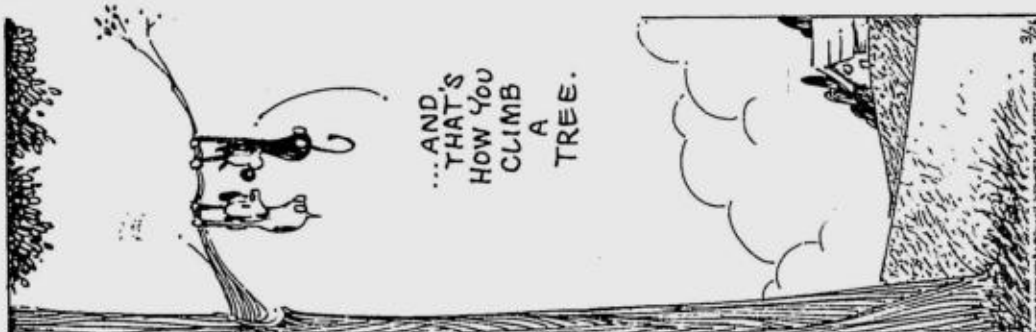


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YOU BORN TODAY: You approach life directly and simply. You know what you want, and you go after it. You like to work at your own pace. Although logical, you rely strongly on your own intuition. You are dependable and responsible. Self-sufficiency is important to you. The year ahead might be one of the best years of your life. Dream big!

Birthdate of: James Caan, actor; Steven Tyler, musician; Leonard Nimoy, actor/director.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Stay clear of family squabbles today, especially with parents. You don't want anyone telling you what to do, and others will not respond kindly to your defiance.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Criticism is difficult to undergo at the best of times. Unfortunately, today is not one of the best of times. Someone older might discourage you. Take it with a grain of salt.

LED (July 23 to Aug. 22): Exciting plans for travel, publishing or education suddenly look impossible. This is disappointing. Fear not; things could change dramatically in a day or two.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): Some days are more worrisome than others. It's hard to say why. The truth is that worry can be a habit. Today this habit might grab you by the throat!

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): Clashes with bosses are likely today. You feel stifled by all forms of authority. Stay clear of the police. Be polite to your supervisor. Be patient with parents.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): This is not an ideal day to share something or decide how to divide the loot. You'll feel hard done by. It seems that others don't appreciate you or your efforts.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Relations with authority figures are definitely not good today. You might be projecting your own negative energies onto those who have power over you.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Cooperation at work might be hard to achieve today. Your best bet is to lower your expectations.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): Don't be quick to judge co-workers today. Pessimism is rampant, and people feel particularly critical of each other now. Be gentle with people. (They need it.)

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): Refrain from being strict or too severe with children today. Similarly, you might feel judgmental about a lover or romantic interest. Try to keep it light.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): You have to ask yourself how much self-gratification you deserve today versus what you owe to others. You feel pulled between duty and doing what you want to do.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Our feelings about money and personal wealth often have very little to do with what we actually own. If you're content with what you have, you're rich! If you have much but are longing for more, you're poor!

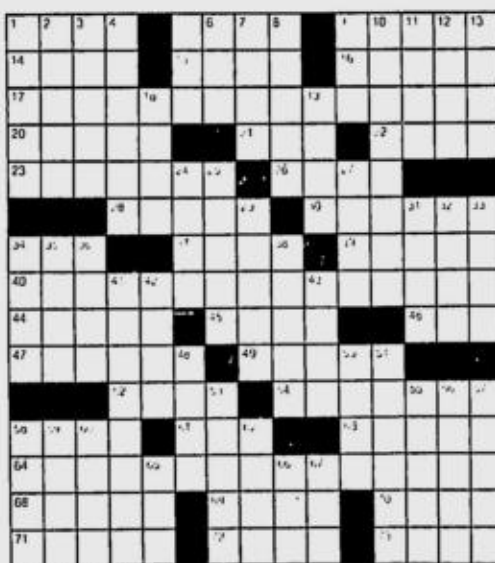
DAILY CROSSWORD

ACROSS

- 1 Jug handles
- 5 Jazz sessions
- 9 Bitter
- 14 Cut short
- 15 Go kerplunk
- 16 Pesto or marinara
- 17 Energize
- 20 Post-workout woes
- 21 Grant's foe
- 22 Swiss capital
- 23 Foursomes
- 26 Otherwise
- 28 Novelist Jong
- 30 Swaggers
- 34 Put into service
- 37 Steals
- 39 Bert's Muppet pal
- 40 Land in trouble
- 44 Barbera's partner in cartoons
- 45 Sport of princes
- 46 Poetic peeper
- 47 Motionless
- 49 Blusher
- 52 Building additions
- 54 Bin's purpose
- 58 Way off
- 61 Chowd down
- 63 Tree trunks
- 64 Block any retreat
- 68 Produce offspring
- 69 Fencing item
- 70 Creature comforts
- 71 Exhilarate
- 72 Short-tailed wildcat
- 73 Dates

DOWN

- 1 Brilliant success
- 2 Lewis Carroll heroine
- 3 Correct
- 4 Domain
- 5 Vichy or Ems
- 6 North Pole denizen
- 7 Hard work
- 8 Fling
- 9 Tempe sch.



By Diane C. Baldwin
Columbia, MD

3/26/04

Thursday's Puzzle Solved



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- 10 Australian capital
- 11 Ill-mannered
- 12 Cake finisher
- 13 Laura of "Jurassic Park"
- 18 Old Russian VIP
- 19 Slippery critters
- 24 Malicious gossip
- 25 Reporter's exclusive
- 27 Fret and fuss
- 29 Find repugnant
- 31 "Do" others...
- 32 Cake layer
- 33 Belgrade inhabitant
- 34 Exclamations of disgust
- 35 Pants part
- 36 Sicilian spouter
- 38 Goes it alone
- 41 Cyberspace
- 42 Hammer's target
- 43 Racetrack figure
- 48 Kin group
- 50 Mongolian desert
- 51 Wears away
- 53 Iron alloy
- 55 Pond scum
- 56 Gaggle members
- 57 Snaking curves
- 58 French cleric
- 59 Roll up
- 60 Surface measure
- 62 Catch sight of
- 65 Pindar piece
- 66 Poet Jonson
- 67 Movie critic
- Reed

BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON



MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO



KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA



LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO



TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBING





COMEDY king Dolphy and Albert Martinez



DORIS Magsaysay-Ho and Ernest Escaler



ALEX Montes, Keren Pascual, Borgy Manotoc and Edward Kazanov



ERIC Quizon with Essences' Toni Abad (left) and Rhoda Campos



HANS Sy and Ricco Ocampo

RAJO Laurel, Zsa-zsa Padilla and Vicky Belo



MAXINE Chua, Naynay Ventura, Leah Puyat, Angelette Calero, Eds Genuino and Myrza Sison



MILLET Mananquil and Joji Dingcong



HK socialite Bonnie Gokson, Tina Maristela-Ocampo and Piolo Pascual

Full circle of living and fun

From page 11

made. The hotel's communication director, Joy Wassmer, with general manager Jarlath Lynch and EAM for Food and Beverage Sigi Bierbaumer, were also on hand to make sure that everything went well. DJ Jon Herrera provided music for the evening.

After dinner, 360° Living presented guests with their very own houses and lots—baked houses and lots, that is. Cake artist Martha Matute created beautiful masterpieces in the form of tiny model houses that the guests could take home with them. A splendid end to the evening, and a crafty teaser for 360° Living.

Other guests present for the evening were L'Oréal's Leica Carpo; Piandre's Peachy Zulueta; designer Paul Cabral; El Mundo journalist Dante Jimenez; media men Robert Mananquil, Philip Cu-Unjieng, Anton San Diego and Pepper Teehankee; Mega's Liza Ilarde-Cuenca; the Leviste père et fine Tony and Toni; doctors Aye and Ome Nuguid, top models

Robby, Rissa and Raya, and Rissa's husband Marzo Samson; new leading man Luke Jickain; Portuguese/Spanish hunk Alex Montes; French model Troy Yumul; the Cosmo bachelor Brent Javier; good looking trio JR Isaac, JM Rodriguez and Miko Palanca; Judith and Juanjo Berenguer-Testa; Monique Villonco; Anton Baretto, Eds Genuino, Marisa Lope, Judith and Mike Monsod.

On hand from 360° Living, just to make sure that things flowed smoothly, were Brittany Corporation president Jing Serrano, 360° Living division head Mary Lee Sadiasa, and corporate communications head Nova Noval.

Designed for upwardly mobile couples who are looking for properties to match their ideal lifestyle, 360° Living has four projects, with the Cottonwoods in Antipolo as its flagship. Its other developments include Vita Toscana in Cavite; La Posada in Brittany Bay, Sucat; Crosswinds in Tagaytay; and Portofino in Alabang.

To visit the properties, call 8502868 or 8506986.

We're ^{still} looking good

We've been around more waists and in people's pockets than you can ever imagine.

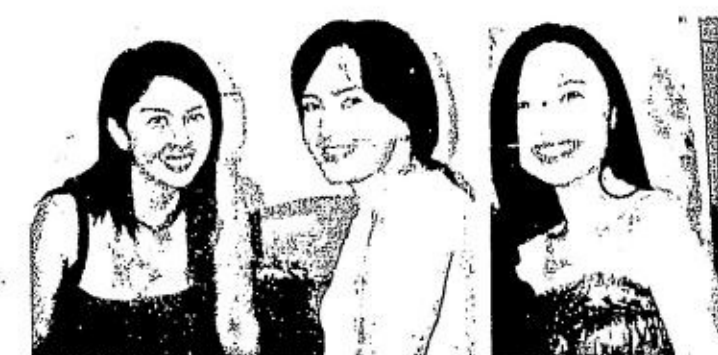
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If, for example, you load P150 and wish to convert your P120 load to 180 text messages to other networks, simply dial 225 and follow the voice instructions. You may use your remaining balance of P30 load to make calls. You may also use it for Sun-to-Sun text messages, and continue to enjoy the ultra-affordable P0.50 per text rate.

IMPORTANT REMINDERS:

- Your converted load is only applicable for texting to other networks. You may use your remaining load to make voice calls and send Sun-to-Sun text messages.
- Convert-a-Load allows you to make calls depending on how much your remaining load will be after conversion. You can still continue to receive both incoming calls and text messages.
- The expiration of your Convert-a-Load text messages follows the expiration of your call card denomination or 30 days, whichever is shorter.
 - If you loaded three (3) P50 Sun call cards and converted P120 of that load, the text messages that you will get from the conversion will expire on the same day your call card balance expires, or within 7 days.
 - If you loaded a P150 Sun call card and converted P120 of that load, the text messages that you will get from the conversion will expire on the same day your call card balance expires, or within 30 days.
 - If you loaded a P300 Sun call card and converted P120 of that load, the text messages that you will get from the conversion will still expire within 30 days.
- Once you convert your load, it may not be converted back to regular load anymore.

SUN
CELLULAR
PREPAID

CRABTREE
& Evelyn
Gardeners
Hand Recovery
Lotion

LIFESTYLE

Gift ideas
for bridal
showers

MY VERY close friend just got married yesterday. Right before the big day, she had a bed and bath bridal shower. I wanted to give her something luxurious, a gift she would love but would feel guilty to buy for herself.

Everything that crossed my mind and could fit my budget seemed commonplace and ordinary, so I roamed the malls for something unique and ended up in Crabtree and Evelyn at Greenbelt 1.

Turned out the store has a great promo until April 4. A purchase of P3,000 worth of goods entitles a customer to a free C&E embroidered bath towel or two hand

GIFT/J3

MAKEOVER
911

Kinmy Salas

Underarm hair hassle?
Not anymore!

"Hair on my underarms? It's such a hassle especially for women like me who have a lot of different things to attend to. Imagine, having to shave everyday...wax every so often...and sometimes when I'm in a hurry, I can't help but get cuts and nicks. It's really irritating!"

"Now with LaserLight Hair Removal, I'm happy -- very happy. I really recommend it because the result is for life. No more shaving...no more waxing...no more hassle! It really saves time and everything. Plus the result: softer...smoother...whiter skin. It's really worth it."

Cristina Gonzalez-Romualdez
Former Actress/Restaurateur

LaserLight Hair Removal is FDA-approved for permanent reduction of unsightly, unwanted hair anywhere on your body. The Facial Care Centre has professional skincare consultants, in-house dermatologists, and well-trained therapists. So you're sure to have satin-smooth, hair-free, whiter skin. Call now.

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MAKATI 816 1259 815 3121	ORTIGAS 687 2196 687 2197	QUEZON CITY 372 6633 372 6634	SHAW 534 7701/02 717 0076	ALABANG 842 1144 809 9583	BINONDO 243 8138/39 243 8602	CONGRESSIONAL 920 7938 920 7992	PAMPANGA 961 3404/08 860 2663/64	CEBU 233 7631 233 7633/35	OPENING HOURS: MON-FRI: 8:00AM-7:00PM SAT: 8:00AM-5:00PM www.facialcarecentre.com.ph
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updateable to take the guesswork out of housework, everytime. All completely built in Germany. All built on the Miele philosophy of "Immer Besser" – Forever Better.

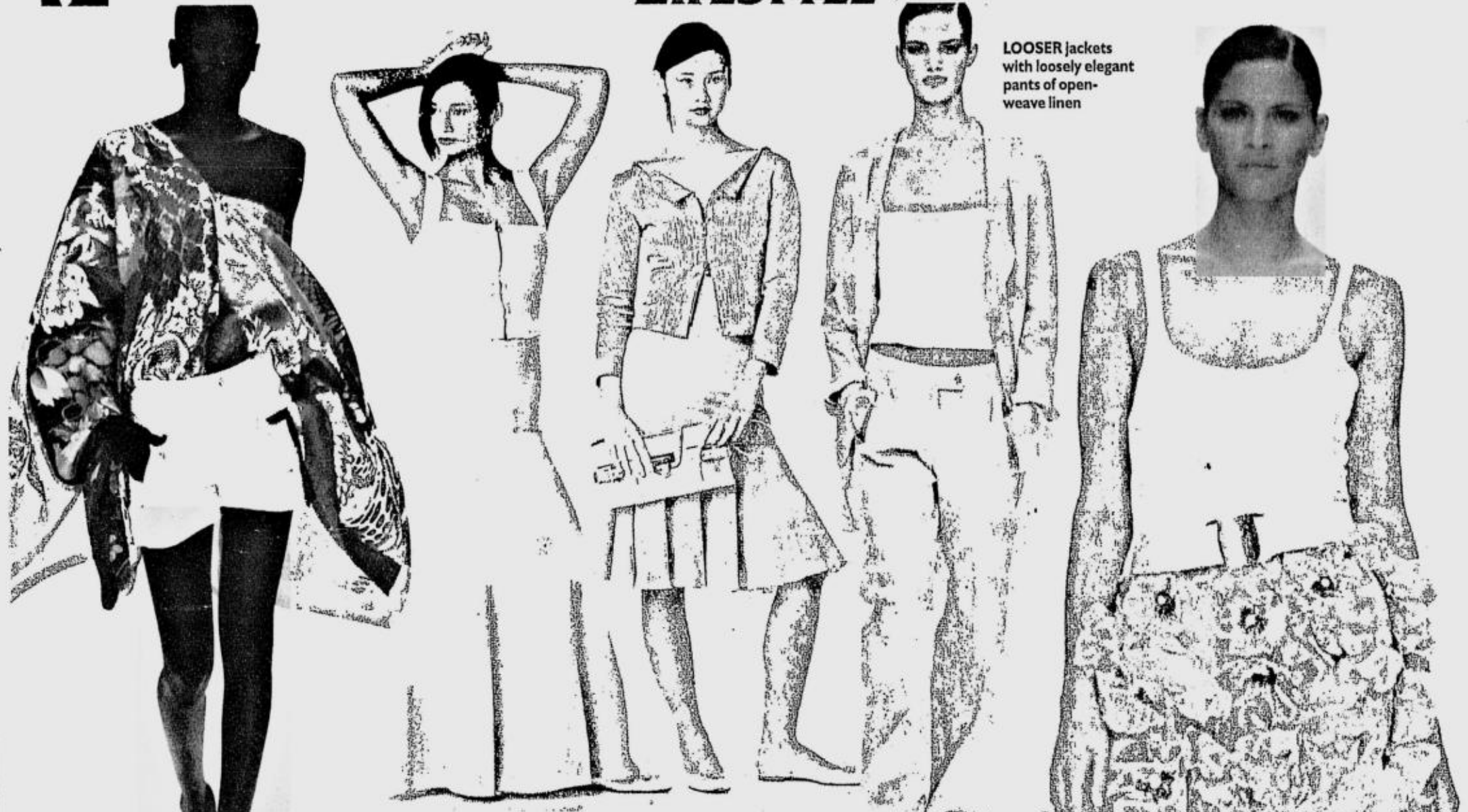
See what happens when technology looks as good as it works.



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Miele
Anything else is a compromise



LOOSER jackets with loosely elegant pants of open-weave linen

SALVATORE Ferragamo's transparent billowing chiffon caftan

COOL colors in vetro green, champagne, nemphea/lilac and pearl grey, and contrast volumes of fitted tops and loose skirts

Season of light and breezy styles

THE SPIRIT of spring at Salvatore Ferragamo is unbearably light and unmistakably individual.

Contrast volumes and fabrics are key, either very fitted on top with loose casual pants or skirts, or loose-fit jackets with slim contouring beneath.

Dreamy summer Provençal colors are delectable in serene solids, airy florals, semi-sheer fumes: ice blue with pearl grey; cloud white and champagne; nymphaea/lilac and champagne, or pearl grey; vetro green, shadow and white.

Fitted short leather jackets in

weightless butter-soft suede with the most flattering scooped necklines, are so very feminine when worn over contrasting, loosely elegant pants of cotton or open-weave linen.

Conversely, looser, blousier jackets are shown with slimmer pants or knee-length skirts. Undulating layers of chiffon flutter over suede in sophisticated dresses or skirts; or viscose skirts in flattering body-contouring panels with zigzag stitching flare stylishly at the ankles.

Chic loose-weave linen cuffed shorts and iridescent floral jacquard jackets, or cuffed Capri pants and a

matching boxy jacket are smart, breezy and young in spirit.

A strong nautical patchwork story with canvas, suede, zigzag stitching and grommets translates into casually elegant skirts and accessories.

For evening, full-length fountains of frothy chiffon create airy summer elegance, with handkerchief hems, soft layers and swirling movement. And there are transparent billowing caftans over chiffon swimsuits.

In the Philippines, Stores Specialists Inc. is the exclusive franchise holder of Salvatore Ferragamo. The Ferragamo boutique is located at Rustan's Makati and Greenbelt 4.



EVENING ELEGANCE. Fountains of frothy chiffon with soft layers and swirling movements

Contemporary premium timepieces



ELEGANTLY sporty Aquanaut watch

SWITZERLAND is famous for premium watches, among them the Aquanaut line of timepieces.

No two models of the Aquanaut watch are alike. Each watch comes with accessories that can be used to give it a distinct look and contemporary design in combination with Swiss-made precision technology. Thus, the watches can be modern, original, elegant and athletic at the same time.

At the heart of the Aquanaut Cuda model is a watch jewel (39 mm) that beats at a movement of a quartz calibre (ETA 251.471). And stocked with every Cuda watch is a specially designed screwdriver that can be used not only to change bezel and mask, but also to replace the interchangeable strap.

The strap can go from classic (top-stitched genuine calfskin leather, or stainless steel) to elegant (top-stitched genuine alligator or "Croc'Line" leather) to athletic (PU-rubber).

Every strap is accompanied by a patented, double-prong buckle, with the exception of the stainless steel strap, which has its own "butterfly" lock, also in stainless steel.

The Cuda chronograph is protected by a three-dimensional Cuda-Aquanaut "Seahorse" logo on the back of its all-stainless steel case. Also featured is a counter with the patented "Off-Shore" propeller.

Aquanaut Swiss watches are available at Washington Watch Store at Shangri-La Mall.



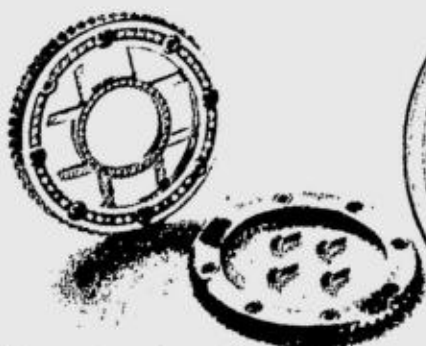
SCREWDRIVER that comes with every Cuda watch



PU rubber strap is interchangeable with top-stitched genuine calfskin leather or stainless steel



PRINCESS CUD-AQUANAUTIC watch for women is a small wonder of contemporary design



EVERY Cuda model can be decorated with (top) bezel and mask, set with diamonds or plain; all you have to do for this is to unscrew the four BTR screws set at 12:00, 6:00, 3:00 and 9:00



COUNTER and propeller

Gift ideas for bridal showers

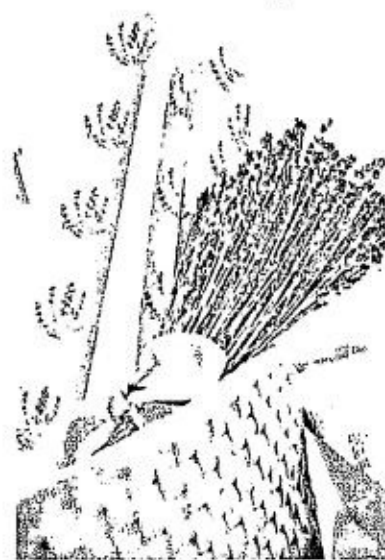
From page J1

towels. That's great, I thought, there's something in it for me, too.

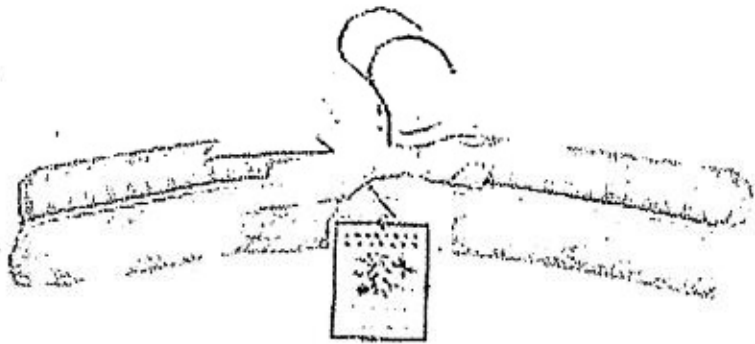
I decided to give my friend Scented Drawer Lining Papers in Spring Rain, priced at P1,275 for six pieces. I threw in a set of two scented padded hangers for myself as well, for P775.

But my beauty discovery was the store's Gardeners Hand Recovery Lotion at P975. It's a three-in-one rinse-off formulation that cleanses, exfoliates and conditions rough hands and makes them feel silky afterwards.

The product comes in several scents, but I chose the one that smelled very clean and unisex and came in a simple copper tin packaging. The others were too girly or babyish. Guy friends, the ones who usually have the rough scratchy hands, would never think of using them.



C&E lavender drawer liners



CRABTREE & Evelyn scented padded hangers in Summer Hill

I was also tempted to buy La Source One (the spa line fragrance) because it was also unisex, but I didn't have the budget anymore. Anyway, I was told that the best-selling scents for bath and body in the store are Goat Milk, Jojoba and Aloe Vera, and the favorite drawer liner is still Lavender.

New magazine

Dr. Vicki Belo recently launched her cosmetic surgery-cum-beauty magazine at Melo's across ABS-CBN with a star-studded, sexy Latin carnival theme.

The magazine is aptly called Skin. Its two-sided covers feature Aubrey Miles for the "face" part and a steamy Angela Velez for the "body" part.

Having leafed through it, I think the mag answers every question I could think of with regard to cosmetic surgery procedures such as Rhinoplasty (nose-lift), Blepharoplasty (eye surgery), and stretch marks and cellulite treatments.

The fact that specialist surgeons such as Dr. Ed Yap and Dr. Vic Lopez have their own columns where they discuss their expertise and answer questions from readers makes this magazine a must-read.

My favorite portions are the gallery of stars and their favorite Belo procedures and services, which

are only available at Belomed, such as the Aptos Thread No-Cutting Facelift and the Hydrogel Butt Augmentation, which you can avail of if you want to achieve J.Lo proportions.

I especially learned a lot from the section where Angela Velez discussed her breast augmentation openly. This, aside from liposuction, is the most common concern among readers of this column, as Asians are among the least blessed in the breast department.

It was also comforting to know that men, however good-looking they are, like Albert Martinez and Jericho Rosales, have beauty concerns too, like frown lines and acne.

Skin Magazine is a good buy at P120, and is available at the Belo clinic branches and select magazine stands. The last time I interviewed Dr. Belo, she was not sure if she would publish a second issue this year.

If she does decide to make it regular, it will not be a monthly thing, and I can't really blame her, because this first issue will be a tough one to beat. This magazine is now part of my beauty reference guide. (A caveat: The magazine is not for children.)

E-mail the author at kin-nysalas@yahoo.com

His wife doesn't like sex

DEAR Tita Dulce,

I read your response to a gentleman about why his wife was no longer interested in having marital relations with him. I have the same problem with my wife of almost five years.

My wife feels that once a month is more than enough, and that most men would be satisfied with that. It does not matter to her what I think or what "professionals" have said on the subject. She said the problem was her, not me. She said we needed to separate so she might find the desire again.

When she does allow us to get together, she gets mad if I take longer than five minutes. She is the first woman I met (though I'm sure there are many others) who complains about foreplay. She says she gets bored with it, although her body says otherwise.

Afterwards, she tells me how good it felt, which does not make sense because, if it felt good, then she should like it to happen again or more often. Maybe I am out on the left field on this one.

I have tried soft lights and fire in the fireplace. She once had a glass of wine with me in this setting—then she decided she needed to do something else. We do not have any children at home to break the mood. I don't think it's due to hormonal changes.

She was this way long before her hysterectomy. She refuses to talk with the gynecologist about this.

From what she told me, each of her previous husbands had the same complaint. I guess that was why one of them laughed when he found out she was getting married again.

I have tried, but I am at that point (where I feel) maybe we should call it quits. Life is too short not to be happy.

JOHN

Some important points to consider: She admits that her previous husbands had the same complaint, and she acknowledges that the problem is with her and not with you or any of her previous husbands. Despite that, she has not and would not seek counseling or therapy.

LIVE AND LET LIVE



Tita Dulce

Those points suggest one thing. She expects that if anyone has to adjust, it has to be her husband and not her. Or, said another way, take it or leave it.

I think anyone who reads your letter could see that you've tried your best to take it. I don't think they would condemn you should you now decide to leave it.

I would understand her attitude if you've been asking for terribly frequent and/or bizarre sexual encounters. But by her standards—once a month, no foreplay, and over in five minutes—any normal guy would appear like an oversexed old goat, and that's an unfair image to inflict on a spouse.

Obviously, your wife is emotionally and mentally unable to enjoy sexual intercourse. That would have been no problem had she chosen to be celibate. The fact, however, is she chose to get married four times, even when it has been obvious to her as early as, say, the second or third marriage that she is incapable of satisfactorily performing the complete role of a wife. Her history, therefore, makes me suspect that she has an unhealthy regard for men and for marriage.

She could have told you before the wedding what her sexual standards were. But she didn't, which makes me conclude that she only used you and her previous husbands for some rather selfish ends.

I wish you would not hate her for that, though. A person must have had suffered a lot for her to display such degree of sexual frigidity and lack of respect for other people and social institutions.

She needs understanding, although she does not really need a husband.

E-mail titadulce@netscape.net or send letters to P.O. Box 2353, Makati CPO 1263 Makati City, or PDI office

'Pagbabago' concert tonight

"PAGBABAGO" is a 14-cut CD collection of songs of empowerment and change by some of the country's best singers, songwriters, producers, arrangers and musicians.

"Pagbabago" artists Jaya, Renz Verano and Radha will hold a free concert tonight at 7 at the Central Plaza of Eastwood City in Libis, Quezon City. The show

will be hosted by Chico and Delamar of the "Morning Rush" of Monster Radio RX 93.1 FM.

"Pagbabago" the album was created to push for the message of positive change," says Trina Belamide, multi-awarded songwriter and producer of the CD. "Reform and renewal in the country and society must start with change from the individual."

The "Pagbabago" concert is a presentation of pagbabago@pilipinas and produced by Silang Communications with support from Globe Telecom, Monster Radio RX 93.1 FM and the Philippine Daily Inquirer.

Other artists in "Pagbabago" are The Company, Da Pulis, Aegis band, Jolina Magdangal, Grace Nono, South Border, Mystica, Apo Hiking Society and Regine Velasquez.

The CD is available at Odyssey Record, Tower Records, Music One, and SM record bar, and through MyAyala.com.

ANNIVERSARY. Domestic carrier South East Asian Airlines (Seair) celebrates its ninth year by giving 29 lucky street children a special treat on March 27: a free 30-minute scenic flight around Mt. Pinatubo. The airline will use its 19-seater LET-410 passenger aircraft for this event, which will be held in Seair's headquarters in Clark Field, Pampanga. The street children are housed by the Angeles Bahay Bata Center, which offers shelter to children suffering from physical, emotional and sexual abuse, neglect and drug addiction. Call (045) 8924767/8924783.

REUNION. The Paco Catholic School high school class 1971 will hold its reunion on March 27 at the Elks Club, 7/F Corinthian Plaza, Paseo de Roxas, Makati, 6 p.m.-12 mn. Call Pinky Razon at 0917-8962315 or Rey Mones at 0920-9001088.

YOGA SEMINAR. Find out how to have a healthier, happier living through Chaitanya Mission's free program "Yoga Lifestyle Seminar," March 27, at 910 Paredes St., Sampaloc, Manila. Call 7366014 to 15.

PROMO. At Beauty Bar, you will re-



JAYA, at the "Pagbabago" concert

ceive a complimentary makeup consultation from celebrity makeup artists of Emphasis Salon. When you're done, strike a pose for the camera as you take home a photo of the new you from Hewlett Packard plus free product samples from Beauty Bar. Schedule an appointment now in the Beauty Bar store nearest you: March 27 and 28, 4-7 p.m., Glorietta; and April 3 and 4, 4-7 p.m., Alabang Town Center.

SALE. Get up to 50-percent discount on a wide variety of Wade shoes until March 30. Wade stores are located at Robinsons Galleria East Wing, Glorietta 2, Ayala Center Makati and The Shops at Greenhills Shopping Center.

FAIR. The Festival Supermall in Filinvest Corporate City, Alabang, is holding an appliance fair at Carousel Court until April 5. In cooperation with Western Marketing, products from JVC, GE, Ariston, ELBA, Sony, TCL, Carrier, Kolon, Fedders, Pioneer, Garant, IMAX, Philips, Sharp, Samsung, and Ambiance One will be on display. Call 8503514.

AUSSIE BRIEFING. The Australian Embassy will hold another information session on April 14. The information session is designed to help prospective applicants and sponsors understand the steps in applying for partner migration to Australia. It gives guidelines for preparing and lodging applications. Officers from Australia's Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (Dimia) discuss spouse, fiancée and interdependent partner categories, their basic visa requirements and the application process.

WRITING WORKSHOP. Tower Book House is conducting a writing workshop for Filipino children aged 8-18 during the summer vacation. Interested participants may call 8154938 or 8156925 or visit the Windsor Tower at 163 Legazpi St., Legazpi Village, Makati City.

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goggles, swimcaps and accessories to join!

Promo runs from March 26 to May 31, 2004
Grand Draw on June 8, 2004

See posters for details



Participating Branches

Per DTI-NCR Term 010 No. 1298 Series of 2004



THE JOCOITALIA "Spillo" Futon, available in yellow, royal blue and red, has angled metal feet and full cushion.

Italian version of Japanese innovation

BLIMS Fine Furniture introduces the Italian's take on a convenience popularized by the Japanese.

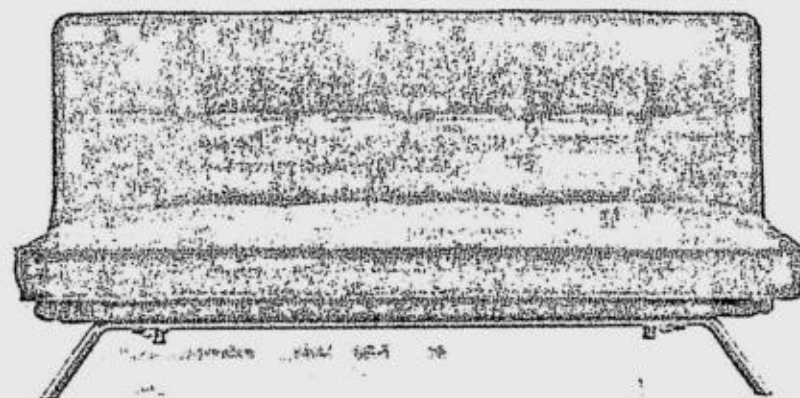
The Jocolitalia Futon Line offers chic futon choices for modern homemakers who have a very limited space to work with. With studio flats and condo units having spaces as small as 25 sq m, people have to learn tricks for living in compact but stylish and tastefully furnished homes.

They now go for smaller pieces like sofa beds, more fashionably known these days as futons. Today's "convertible" beds were inspired by the traditional Japanese quilted mattress often sold with a low, wooden frame that is convertible into a couch. To-

day's futons, however, are far more chic than their Japanese counterparts, with bright-colored fabrics and sturdy metal frames.

Futons are just right for small spaces as they take up much less space yet serve more than just one purpose.

Call 7172267 or 7172272 or visit any Blims Showroom in major shopping centers in Metro Manila including Robinsons Galleria, Greenhills Lifestyle Center, Glorietta 1, Greenbelt 1, Alabang Town Center, Festival Supermall, SM Southmall, Robinsons Place Manila and Robinsons Novaliches. You can also check out its branches on Ayala Avenue, Makati and Ayala Center, Cebu.



THE JOCOITALIA "Replay" Futon with full cushion and angled metal feet

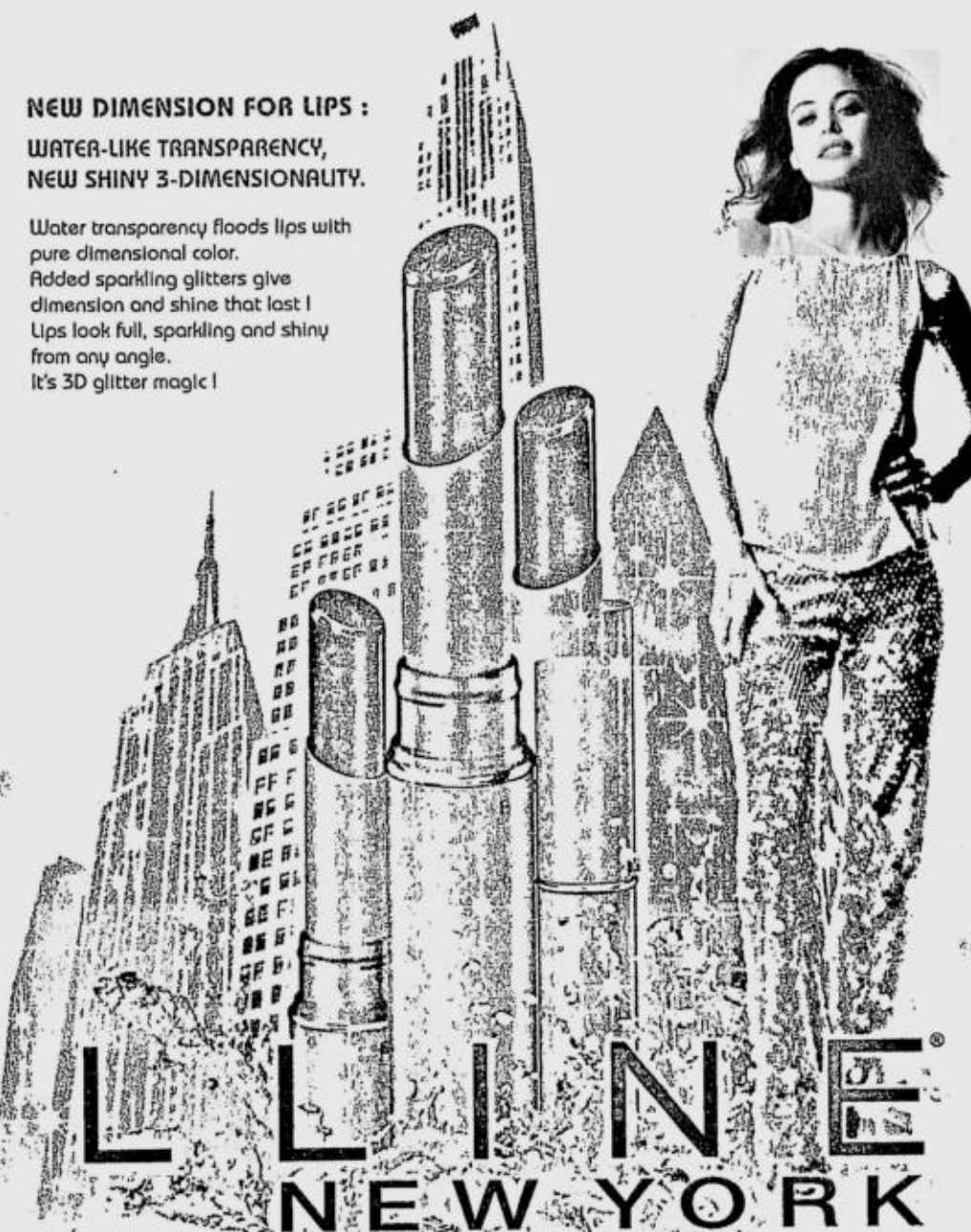


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Cinderella (Glorietta, Megamall, Ermita), PCX, First Aid Greenbelt, Gaisano Metro Ayala, Gaisano Metro Colon

Per DOH-BFAD Permit No. 0302 Series of 2004



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Choosing the Right School for a Better Future

The Filipino student

By Ma. Lourdes Rochelle P. Gutierrez

Dr. Rizal once wrote to the women of Malolos and gave to them an allegorical comparison

"ANG mga Kababaihan ng Malolos ay isang lanta ng nabubuhay man ay naroon sa kadiliman, namumulaklak man ay walang samyo, nagkakaroon man ng bunga ngunit mapait ang lasa."

THE FILIPINO Student of today is no different from the women of Malolos. These young learners are in dire need of deliverance. So many graduates, so little employment. The question "How far does ones diploma go?" is then raised. For the average Filipino child, education comes as early as the age of four. Most of them learn to read and write even before they reach the intermediate level. The indigent members of the society considers graduating if not from high school, grade school at least as satisfactory achievement. It is ironic that despite having a very high literacy rate among Asian countries, the Philippines remains to be a country of slow development and economic growth. Nick Joaquin's heritage of smallness is the probable reply. According to him, the Filipino is courageous with the small but is cowed by the big.

"Is that the explanation for our continuing failure to rise? - that we buy small and sell small, that we aim small and try that we think small and do small?"

But is College Education a dream too big for the Filipino student?

Manila and Quezon City is home to many universities. These institutions produce ample dentists, doctors, nurses, lawyers, teachers, psychologists, etc. every year. This gives us a clear picture of how big, vast and numerous opportunities are to the Philippines, how promising all graduates are to this country.

Promises that are all flying out of the country. To blame brain drain will be quite unfair. And why not? The argument: "if only these are good working occasions here, I wouldn't opt working abroad" holds quite true. Those professionals catering there services to the foreign land feel no remorse. The feeble situation of this land is likely the very reason why the Filipino student turn to their books. Young Juan Dela Cruz goes to school because he wants a better life - is there better life here in the Philippines? That is another question.

It is a pity that the Filipino student labor earnestly for a degree and often find little fulfillment. Children go to school, they learn to write their names, read, reason and discover but then they end up as "schooled" and not as 'educated'. They realized the value of education but are blinded by the monster of poverty. The Presidential candidates court them for their votes in the promise of a better future ahead of them but most have simply lost trust and are tired of believing. It is high time that action is taken for the students. Competence is a word worth rejuvenating in colleges and universities. Literacy alone is useless. The Filipino student should not just learn but live with principles and values, should not just read but weigh and consider should not just look but observe. Should not just dream but create reality. The Filipino student has the power to pursue change, if only he chooses too.

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THROUGHOUT its more than 75 years of existence, Miriam College (formerly Maryknoll College) has established a history of commitment to quality education. Through the years it has continued to be a premier Filipino Catholic learning institution with a strong liberal arts program infused with the Christian values of truth, justice, peace, and integrity of creation. Its curriculum is further enhanced by modern technology and enriched by national and international linkages.

Its graduates have carved a niche for being distinguished professionals. Several have been cabinet secretaries, legislators, businesswomen, and educators. Thirteen of its alumnae have been selected as "The Outstanding Women in the Nation's Service" (Towns) awardees.

Miriam College is one of ten institutions in the National Capital Region granted full autonomy status by the Commission on Higher Education in October 2001. Its sharp focus on excellent education de-

velops both the learning and caring competencies of young women as it prepares them to be leaders in their chosen professional field, whether it be in accountancy, business administration, entrepreneurship, child development and education, international studies, communication arts, psychology, environmental planning and management, social work, or computer technology. Special focus has been given on social interaction through the Institutional Network for Social Action to create a responsible and responsive future citizens.

To meet the challenges of the times, Miriam College has also set up three major centers for curriculum development, research, and community outreach - the Environmental Studies Institute, Center for Peace Education, and Women and Gender Institute. These special advocacy centers serve as principal channels to manifest the alignment of Miriam College core values with national development.

2nd National Social Sciences Seminar Workshop set

THE BAGONG Kasaysayan-Bahay Saliksikan sa Kasaysayan (Bakas) Inc and the Poveda Learning Center, will conduct the 2nd National Seminar-Workshop in Historiography and the Social Sciences on April 12-14, at the Audio-Visual Room, Poveda Learning Center, Ortigas, Pasig City.

The theme of the seminar-workshop is "Iba't Ibang Pilosopiya at Pamamaraan sa Pagsulat at Pagtuturo ng Kasaysayan."

Notable educators in the field of the social sciences namely Prof. Ambeth Ocampo (director, National Historical Institute), Dr. Reynaldo Ito (Singapore National University), Dr. Zenaida Reyes (Philippine Normal University), Dr.

Zeus Salazar (UP Diliman/DLSU Taft), and Prof. Boyet Fernandez (Miriam College) are among the list of invited guest speakers.

All educators of all educational levels are invited. A registration fee of P2,800 for the three day event is inclusive of lunch and snacks, conference kit, monographs, photocopied materials, and a certificate of attendance will be charged per participant.

For more information, contact Prof. Ma. Carmen Peñalosa, Bakas Coordinator and assistant professor of the International Studies Department, Miriam College at tel nos. 927-2369 and 926-0062 or e-mail: bakas_palan@hotmail.com

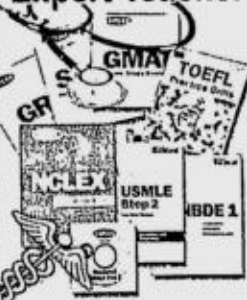
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Filipino HS grads not ready for college

A MAJORITY of Filipino high school graduates may not have the necessary skills to succeed in college, says a top official of one of the country's largest college networks. The official stated many high school graduates today cannot meet the academic standards of leading colleges and universities nor possess the right skills and abilities that will help them progress in college.

iAcademy governor and University of Makati (UMak) president Tommy Lopez said many high schools students are ill prepared for college. Thus, when they go to the college or university of their choice, they tend to have a "culture shock." He also pointed that many high school graduates lack the skills in fundamental subjects such as Math and English.

"A more refined curriculum for the public high school system is, I think, one of the best ways to properly prepare our students for college. That way, they can handle the challenges of tertiary education in a high and more competitive level," Lopez said.

This is over and above the other problems besetting the public school system such as shortage of teachers, lack of classrooms, chairs and desks, and textbooks.

To help improve the chances of high school graduates in coping and performing well for their tertiary education, all high school students are invited to join the "Career Factor" which is a FREE college preparatory training program for any course.

Career Factor is designed to be a learning adventure full of fun challenges, self discovery, total participation and high involvement for graduating high school students. The program aims to help students decide on what course to take for college based on their respective skills and competencies.

Among the featured activities in Career Factor are role playing, observation, mental imagery, writing tasks, projects and simulations. The program is now on going in STI campuses nationwide, for more information they can inquire at the nearest STI campus.

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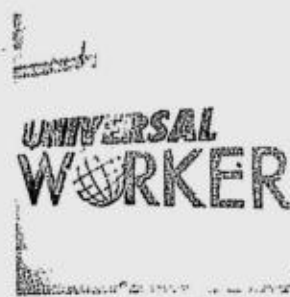
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MSA review programs aim to train students to pass the college entrance tests conducted by the country's top colleges and universities. The classes cover the areas of Mathematics, English, Science and Analytical Ability. MSA is proud to announce that 100 percent of its reviewers who met the MSA College Entrance Test passing standard were qualified for admission to the University of the Philippines, Ateneo De Manila University, De La Salle University, University of Asia and the Pacific (UA&P) or University of Santo Tomas (UST). Aside from Entrance Test reviews, MSA also offers Academic Advancement Program, one-on-one tutorials, review classes for high school entrance tests and review programs for

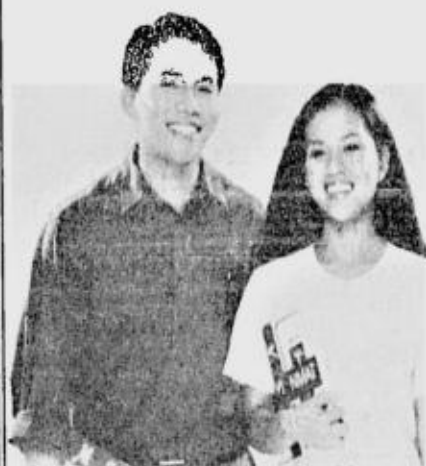
civil service examinations, teachers' licensure examinations and the National Medical Admission Test.



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From page K4

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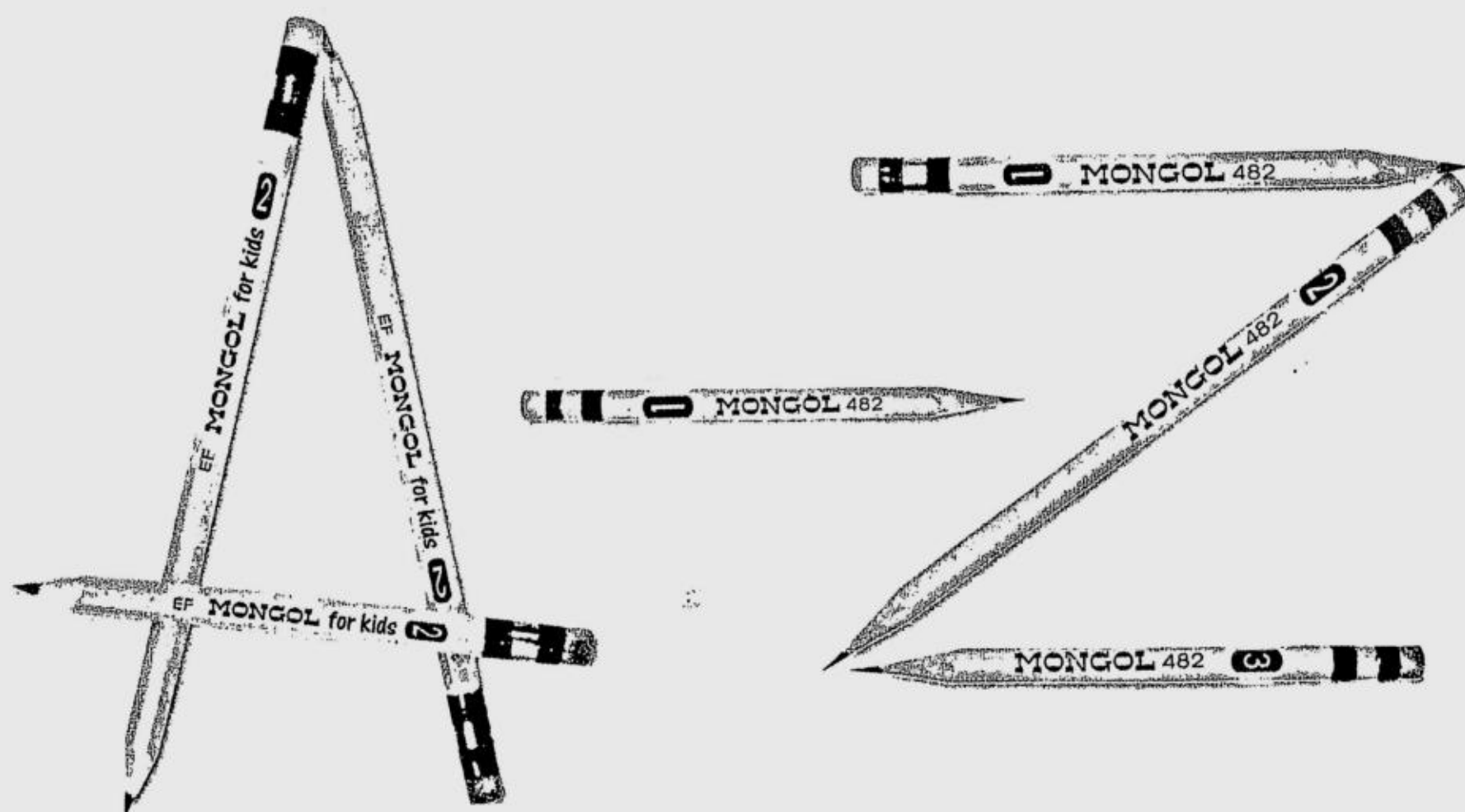
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Icsec-Kaplan introduces Problem-Based Learning (PBL) Method in Local Nursing Review Program

THE INTERNATIONAL Cultural Studies and Education Corp (Icsec) is set to conduct this summer the second batch of its review program for the local Nursing Licensure Examination (NLE) with the latest significant improvement in its curriculum. For this batch, the NLE takes on a new feature by adopting the Problem-Based Learning Method in two of our test preparation programs for nursing graduates: the Refresher Course and the Test Prep Program.

According to Ma. Aurora Diaz, deputy director for Icsec Medical Programs, one of the objectives of the revisions in methodology is for students to develop analytical and critical thinking skills, which is essentially necessary before meeting head-on-the-actual board examination. It teaches students to acquire first-hand information and apply corresponding solutions to a given problem using the wealth of theoretical skills gained throughout the course of their studies. As such, employing the PBL method will ideally present a more dynamic and student-centered participation and learning, thus making Icsec-Kaplan totally different and one of its kind among other review centers in the country, she adds.

The International Cultural Studies and Edu-

cation Corp or Icsec is the exclusive licensee of Kaplan Test Prep programs in the Philippines. Kaplan Educational Center is America's authority and world leader in test preparation. Kaplan is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Washington

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For more information on Icsec-Kaplan's Nursing Licensure Programs and discounts, please get in touch with any of our center staff at Makati - 813-8222/82, 892-3443, 811-5885, 817-7725; Manila - 735-7713 to 16; Quezon City - 371-8966 to 68, 372-1689; Cebu City - (032) 254-1388; 412-9977.

Professionals on the competitive edge through Kaplan International Academics, health programs

BUSINESS professionals, lawyers, doctors, nurses, dentists and even students from all walks of life find it among themselves that passing that all-important test of their lives is what all they need to succeed in their career professions. Having to finish on top of the heap is certainly something to be proud of as an early accomplishment for success. But getting there is half the story. One should be able to make the necessary and guaranteed ways of preparations in order to reach that goal. And that is where Kaplan helps.

Over the years, a number of successful professionals have been making it big in their chosen career abroad. One reason for their success: a relatively higher GMAT, GRE, LSAT, USMLE, NCLEX, CGFNS, NDBE, TOEFL and SAT score compared with the rest of the pool. The above-mentioned tests are standardized examinations, which one has to score high or at least pass to be admitted in various business, law, health institutions and universities in the US or in Europe.

Kaplan recognizes that competition is indeed fierce in an arena where one has to stay consistent-

ly on guard to remain relevant. It is in this aspect that Kaplan seeks to instill the essential test-making skills and strategies to our students for them to focus all their theoretical concepts into a powerful tool that would eventually equip them with that much-needed edge over the rest.

As background, the International Cultural Studies and Education Corp or Icsec is the exclusive licensee of Kaplan Test Prep programs in the Philippines. Kaplan Educational Center is America's authority and world leader in test preparation. Kaplan is a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Washington Post and a sister company of the Newsweek International. Icsec offers the following programs among others: NCLEX, CGFNS, USMLE 1 to 3, GMAT, GRE and TOEFL.

For more information on Kaplan's International Academics, Health Programs and discounts, please get in touch with any of our center staff at: Makati - 813-8222/82, 892-3443, 811-5885, 817-7725; Manila - 735-7713 to 16; Quezon City - 371-8966 to 68, 372-1689; Cebu City - (032) 254-1388; 412-9977.



St. Scholastica's College

2560 Leon Guinto St., Malate, Manila Tel. #: (632) 5247686-89 loc. 168
Fax #: (632) 5366348 Email: sscadmit@ssc.edu.ph Website: www.ssc.edu.ph

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for School Year 2003-2004

Magna Cum Laude

Gladys Villareal
Anjela Galura

Carla Anne Lloren
Joanne Lazareto

Ria Anne Cajucom
Madeline Jane Banta

Lea Aure
Jennifer Asis

Caitlin Niña Poblador

Board Passers

CPA Board

Evangeline Espiritu
Araceli Fontillas
Margelyn Lapina
Dianne Llagas

Ma. Ann Lourdes Millan
Denise San Diego
Mia Grace Soledad April
Michelle Villanueva

St. Scholastica's College received a Certificate of Recognition from the Professional Regulatory Commission (PRC) as a top performing school, Rank 2 (Category D: 10-25 examinees).

Nutrition & Dietetics

Hanna Acido
Leive Lobaquis
Elaine Nua
JB Tacderas

Interior Design

Melissa Ambion
Christianne Marie Bamachea
Mabe Leonar
Laurice Ruiz
Carolyn Vinson

Sports Awards

34th WNCAA Swimming Competition:

Eleanor Louise Hau
Diane Cataluna
Josefa Cristina Tagulao
Cherry Corro

Ma. Louisa Villena
Le Anne Chua
Vanessa Cabrera
Celine Josol

34th WNCAA Taekwondo Competition:

Samilou Palma
Mia Natividad
34th WNCAA Athletic Competition:

Catherine Jamias
Coralyn Zara Abigail Quintos

Clarisse Ablang
Isobel Crame

National Petron Inter-School Taekwondo

Competition: Susan Joyce Se
Abigail Quintos

2nd Women's College Sports Association (WCSA)

Competition in Swimming: Eleanor Hau
Cherry Lyn Corro
Josefa Tagulao

Diane Cataluna
Le Anne Chua

Academic Competitions

HRM Yr. III...Regional Champion & 2nd place
National Finals in the UBF Foodsolutions
Dream Team Challenge 2004
ID Yr IV...Interior Design Competition 2004
Isobel Crame...Best Booth Concept
(Design Perspectives 2004)

Service Awards

Mother Birgitta Certificate
of Merit...Valerie May Cruz
Sr. Frideswida Certificate
of Merit...Sunnyrose Peralta
Pope John XXIII Award...Valerie Cruz
Pope John XXIII Certificate
of Merit...Mary Jade Ignacio
Sports Award...Liezl Dimla
Sports Certificate of
Merit...Cherry Lyn Corro
Catherine Ng

St. Hildegard Special Citation for
Environmental Concern...Clara Ann Lira

Performing / Visual Arts

Sining Tanghalan...Viewers Choice in the
UP Theater Festival
Alejandro Consolacion...1st prize in the
Contemporary Church Music Category at the
Arezzo Competition in Italy

Other Awards:

34th WNCAA Competitions:

Champion: Pep Squad (for 3 consecutive years)
2nd WCSA Competitions: Champion: Volleyball
Team

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Bachelor of Science in Business
Administration (BSBA)

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- Economics
- Management
- Marketing
- Management Accounting

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Classes begin on June 14

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Engineering
Bachelor of Science in Computer
Engineering
Bachelor of Science in Electrical
Engineering
Bachelor of Science in Electronics
and Communications Engineering
Bachelor of Science in Mechanical
Engineering

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Communications Engineering may be
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People, Events & Products

Samsung Electronics ushers in new IT products

SAMSUNG Electronics Philippines (Sepco) fortifies its premier position in digital convergence technology as it recently unveiled an array of information technology products that are expected to create quite a stir in the domestic market.

The IT products launched include optical media solutions, hard disk drives, laser printers, and computer monitors.

Carrying the theme "Samsung Conquers the Archipelago", the product launch was marked by an IT Partners' Night where Sepco feted its outstanding dealers nationwide for their remarkable sales performance.

Sang Youl Eom, Sepco president and CEO, rallied the force for continued market leadership saying "With these new IT products, Samsung is aiming to become the head of the pack in computer technology in the Philippines."

Topping the list of the state-of-the-art IT Products is the SpinPoint P series hard disk drives. It is currently the fastest in the market with a speed of 7,200 RPM.

Describing the SpinPoint P series as the ultimate answer to multimedia requirements, Eom said, "From movies to music, the SpinPoint can store and play back a limitless amount of digital media content on a drive that provides fast and reliable data transmission."

Set to give other printer companies a run for their money are the Samsung printers, which include the world's smallest printer. The Samsung Printer has been strengthening its position as a leading printer manufacturer and has, in fact, overtaken leading players in the United Kingdom, according to a recent IDC research.

Its printers include the ML1510 and ML 1750, which are touted as the smallest printers in the world and are designed for

home and small office use; the ML2150 series that come with a duplexer for two-sided printing and wireless network connectivity, and finally the SCX and the SF5100, which combine printing with fax and copier functions.

"Samsung printers are becoming increasingly popular because of their lower cost of ownership—our toners are at least P300 cheaper than other brands," according to Eom.

Eom says they are also looking to consolidate their position in the Optical Media Solutions (OMS) via their latest model DVD-writer. Currently, Samsung is the top-seller of optical media devices (CD-R, CDRW, DVD-R and DVDRW) in the Philippines, capturing 51 percent of the total market. Since 2003, the company has enjoyed a 500-percent increase in sales.

Eom attributes this to their optical drives' reputation for reliability, which, he says, comes from Samsung's dedication to research and development. Just recently, Samsung developed the lightest and slimmest optical drive for PC notebooks, which is predicted to revolutionize the notebook PC market.

Another anticipated top-seller is Samsung's elegantly designed Sync Master LCD monitor. The Sync Master 173P features 1,280x1, 024-pixel display and comes with fingerprint-resistant silver bezel and Pivot Pro software that enables 90-degree views from landscape to portrait mode for intuitive views of Web or word processing pages.

"The Sync Master is a premium model that answers the needs of multimedia designers for picture-fidelity and distortion-free images from edge to edge," according to Eom.



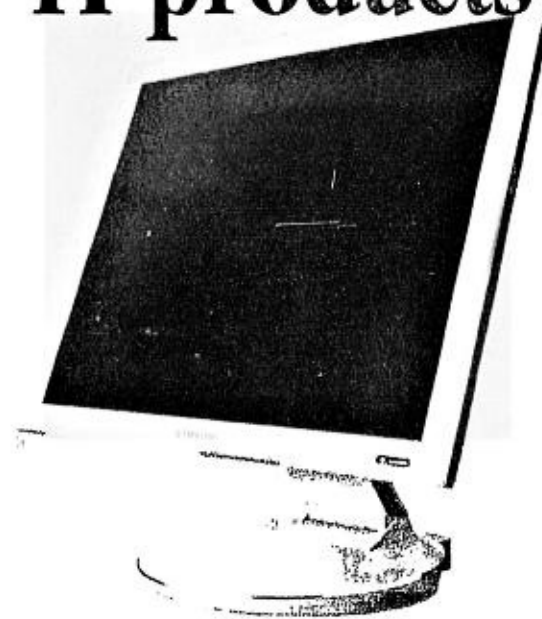
SANG Youl Eom, president and CEO of Samsung Electronics Philippines Corp (Sepco).



SHOWN with Jimmy Go, president of MSI Digiland (center) are Sepco officers from left: Joscel Pendejito, group product manager-IT, Maeng Dal Bae, VP for sales and marketing-IT and telecoms, Karen Gonzales, product manager-OMS and HDD of Sepco, and Angie Limbaco, corporate marketing head of Sepco.



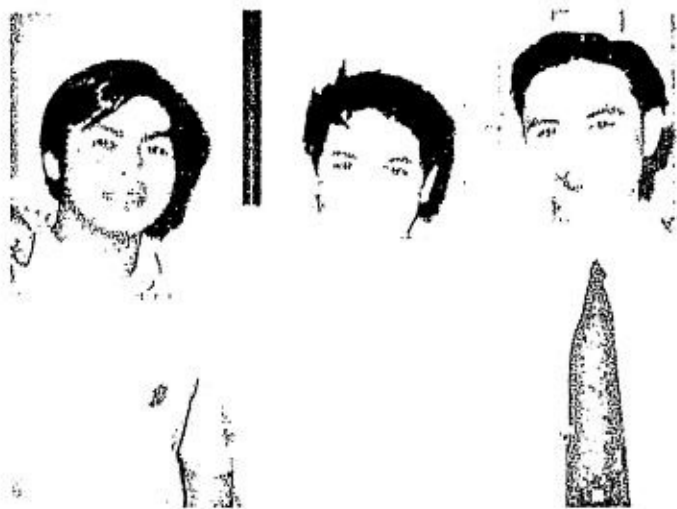
FROM left, Maeng Dal Bae, Rodi Rodriguez III, product manager for laser printers, Gonzales, Pendejito, and Sang Youl Eom.



THE SYNC Master 173P features 1,280x1, 024-pixel display and comes with fingerprint-resistant silver bezel and Pivot Pro software that enables 90-degree views from landscape to portrait mode for intuitive views of Web or word processing pages



SAMSUNG models pose with Maeng Dal Bae, Sang Youl Eom, and Joel Pe, president of Silicon Valley Co.



MOLECULES VISITS SM BAGUIO

Paolo Ballesteros (center), image model of Molecules, recently visited SM Baguio as part of its provincial tour. Shown with Paolo are SM Baguio's staff member Rommel Aglipot (left) and SM Baguio manager Mark de Guzman.



GLITTERING AFFAIR

Indeed, a well-attended occasion during the launch of the Buena Vista (BV) Nature Park and Country Club and Taal View Heights with (first row, from left) Philippine Daily Inquirer columnist Maurice Arcache and Tessa Prieto-Valdes; Ledesco Development Corp VP for operations Fortune Aleta Ledesma; Margaux Salcedo; RJ Ledesma, EVP, Ledesco; Ramon Tan, president of Carica; and Frank Borja, environmental planner of BV and managing partner of

DQA. At the back row (from left), are the 'Ledesco Powerhouse' group composed of Metro Adventure Recreation Club (Marc) director Ramon Marchan; architect Edwin Gumila (partly hidden) for TVH and managing partner of Group Three Design Studios; Manila Bulletin columnist and Agriculture Monthly editor Zac Sarian; and architect Dan Silvestre, urban planner of TVH and managing partner of Dasa-Alternative Urban Futures.



2004 AGORA YOUTH AWARDS

Shown are the Agora Youth award winners with the (sponsors) officers of Cocolife and Philippine Daily Inquirer, taken at the Cocolife head office. Back (from left): Roman Malantic (DLSU Mla), Gerald Moscardon (UST), Miguel Dela Rosa (UNC Naga), Jacee Maniego (PUP), and Laurence Galindez (PUP). Center (standing, from left), officers of Cocolife and Inquirer: Jo Lonzaga (DLSU Mla - Jema), Marco Montes (VP and Luzon region head - Cocolife), Efrén Yambot (1st VP individual marketing divi-

sion - Cocolife), Donald Lim (VP for marketing - Inquirer), lawyer Alfredo Tumacder (president - Cocolife), Ruby Ramores (TUP youth and academe - Philippine Marketing Association), Rene Reinoso (SVP for marketing and sales - Inquirer), Ed Ongalqui (DLSU - Jema) and Ginger Bantigue (UP - JMA). Front (sitting, from left): Ma. Diana Aaron (DLSU Mla), Anna Katrina Bayona (DLSU Mla), Karla Aurora Soliman (UP Diliman), Patricia Poco (DLSU Mla) and Michelle Cortes (DLSU Mla).

What's behind mama V

AS MAMA V holds its opening party 6 p.m. tomorrow, March 27, the family behind the restaurant reveals some interesting aspects of the business.

Mama V aka Tita Vitas, whose great love has been food and eating, was never formally schooled in the culinary arts. Her long-time career had always been in fashion jewelry export and just recently real estate development and management (Alta Vitas Land & Holdings, which built the The Providence Tower in Malate).

She, however, learned to cook at a young age, when her task was to feed a few households on a limited budget. This constraint sharpened her skills in keeping costs down while enhancing the flavor of dishes through the proper cooking technique and generous spicing.

Like all perfectionists, Mama V is very strict with quality control. She is both a hands-on cook and an entrepreneur all rolled into one.

Daughter Tina, a repatriated ex-banker and foodie from New York, now manages the operations of mama V Restaurant. Tina used to bring home about 20 ravenous friends from high school at lunch break, and with no prior notice, Mama V would feed that army in less than half an hour.

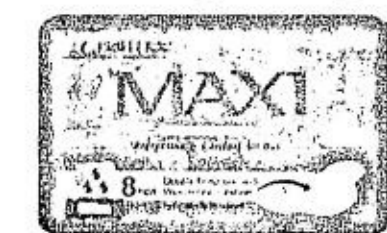
Tina is also spearheading a new line for their restaurant business, which is mama V prepared and frozen foods. Son Howie, an architect and a business owner (Cobis Car Spa in Rockwell) and an expert in car detailing, designed the logo for mama V. Husband Herman and other son Tony are the food testers for the family.

"Although I have a different style of cooking from my mom, I am a big fan. It's comfort food that I want to bring to busy, budget conscious households that neither have help nor time to cook. I came up with the concept for the prepared and frozen foods business, which is 'Why cook when you can have the taste of mama V's cooking at home?' At the end of the day, she adds, food is all about the taste."

mama V Restaurant is at the ground floor of the Foodcourt, The Providence Tower on 2471 Leon Guinto corner Estrada Streets, Malate, Manila.

ProductFILES

Charmee salutes women of all ages



MARCH is the month we celebrate the joys and challenges of being a woman. Like a blooming flower, a young girl awakens to find a whole new world out there. As she moves from child to woman, she begins to understand the changes in her physicality and welcomes her unique sexuality.

When she enters university, studies and school activities take up much of her time. As she starts her career, she is both thrilled at the prospect of success but nervous at the thought of possible failure. She takes a deep breath and starts her own profession.

All too soon, she would have grown into a graceful ally in love to start a family with the man she loves. From bride to mother, she matures into more responsible roles as the children grow up. And as the years pass, she looks at the mirror and treasures the lines on her face—the lines that mark the years filled with happiness and tears.

Throughout these phases, women have a valuable ally in Charmee. Charmee feminine protection products, distributed by East Valley Enterprises Inc (a company of First SLP Holdings Inc), provide superior protection and comfort all day at an affordable price. Charmee feminine pad's Wetness Protection System absorbs from the center as it locks in wetness, giving a dry, fresh feeling. It also has the round channel All-Around Flow guard that blocks overflow, preventing side leaks. And a Soft and Comfortable Cover gives that clean, comfortable feeling preventing skin irritation.

Artistic eye candy

AS THE country's biggest retailer of imported candies shows its candy masterpieces for two months, one week each at the SM Supermalls, get ready to drool. Dubbed "Candy Corner Art Exhibit-Mall Tour", it will feature the candy sculptures of the country's youngest and brightest crop of visual and mixed media artists. The exhibit is now at the SM Centerpoint's upper ground floor between KFC and American Boulevard until March 30 and at SM City Manila's upper ground floor, West Atrium from April 28 to May 4. The Candy Corner Art Exhibit-Mall Tour comes on the heels of the highly successful Candy "Can-Do Event" Jan. 21. For more information, visit www.candycorneronline.com.ph or call Ricky and Bubu Andres at 632-0379 or 632-7741.

Tumble Tots summer class

AFTER successfully establishing Tumble Tots in Davao, the Joji Ilagan Foundation Inc opens its doors to children in Metro Manila. This summer (starting April 19 to May 21), children 6 months to 7 years old can experience going to an international preschool developing personalities through purposeful play. Tumble Tots is a UK-based franchise with over 500 centers in the United Kingdom, Germany and Asia. Its programs allow children to have fun while developing their positive personality traits of self-confidence, self-esteem, self-discipline and independence. Visit Tumble Tots-Makati at the 2nd floor of Jupiter Center, Jupiter corner Galaxy Streets, Bel-Air, Makati from March 26 to April 19 for free trial sessions. For more information, call 637-3706.

Finex forum

THE FINANCIAL Executives Institute of the Philippines (Finex), through its committee for corporate finance/financial institutions, is organizing a half-day seminar/forum on the outlook and direction of local interest rates, inflation trend, and the peso-dollar exchange rate at the Camellia-Dahlia Room, Dusit Hotel Nikko on March 26 from 1 to 5 p.m. Finex has invited well-known policy experts such as BSP Deputy Governor Amador M. Tetangco Jr and newly appointed National Treasurer Mina C. Figueroa as guest speakers to discuss and assess these topics during the seminar. For more details, call Analyn V. Viloria or Philip Santos at the Finex secretariat at 811-4184, 811-4186 or 811-4052.

Franchise show venues

THE GROWING clamor for good business concepts and legitimate franchisors has prompted the Nationwide Franchise & Education Show for Entrepreneurs "Negosyo at Edukasyon Para sa mga EntrePinoy" to open new provincial venues. Be updated with reliable and affordable franchise concepts, and learn how successful franchisors implement their business systems when the franchise and education show hits the road from March 26 to 28 in Baguio City, April 2 to 4 in San Fernando, Pampanga, April 16 to 18 in Marilao, Bulacan, April 30 to May 2 in Lucena, Quezon, May 14 to 16 in Cagayan de Oro, and May 28 to 30 in Iloilo. The SM Group of Companies has agreed to hold the franchise shows in its SM malls in key provincial cities. For inquiries, call the Surex offices at 867-8055/56 or Convex International at 726-4128 to 30.

Discon 2004

THE ROTARY International District 3830 under the leadership of governor Jose L. Cortez Jr will hold its district conference (Discon 2004) at the West-in Philippine Plaza hotel on March 26 and 27. Among the sidelights to the activities are the trade exhibits that have become a perennial highlight to the Discon. The exhibitors include Nova Star Business Club and Rafelli Realty & Development Corp. Nova Star Hotel is being built at Harrison corner Hernandez Avenues, Pasay City, near the intersection of Roxas Boulevard and Edsa, by the Hernandez Group of Companies.

Rediscover love

RETRouvaille, a French word for "rediscovery", is an international Catholic healing ministry that offers hope to hurting couples. Married couples who are struggling to stay together and separated couples who have a sincere desire to give their marriage a chance can experience hope and healing in their marriage. Through Retrouvaille, troubled couples are enjoined to pick up the pieces and to rebuild a stable and lasting relationship. From March 26 to 28, a Retrouvaille weekend will be held at the Saldi Formation House in Antipolo City. For program inquiries, call Msgr. Pagulayan at 895-9064, Tony and Cops at 435-3414 and Merit and Bernie at 0917-7950682.

Taxpayers Recognition Program

THE BIR is celebrating its 100th year of founding in Aug. 1. On the occasion of its centennial year, the BIR will honor and recognize its "Centennial Taxpayers" this Aug. 1st as a fitting tribute to their contribution through the Centennial Taxpayers Recognition Program (CTRP). The CTRP is a voluntary tax program designed to recognize taxpayers, whether corporate or individual, who have shown remarkable growth rates in their tax payments (income and business). For this reason, the management and officials of Revenue Region 8, Makati City led by Director Anselmo G. Adriano and Ma. Nieva A. Guerrero invite its taxpayers to a briefing on March 26 at the Makati Sports Club from 8:30 to 11 a.m. Revenue Region 8 invites taxpayers of RDO 44 Taguig/Pateros; RDO 50 South Makati; RDO 47 East Makati; RDO 51 Pasay City; RDO 48 West Makati; RDO 52 Paranaque City; RDO 49 North Makati; RDO 53 Las Pinas-Muntinlupa.